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MARCH 1990

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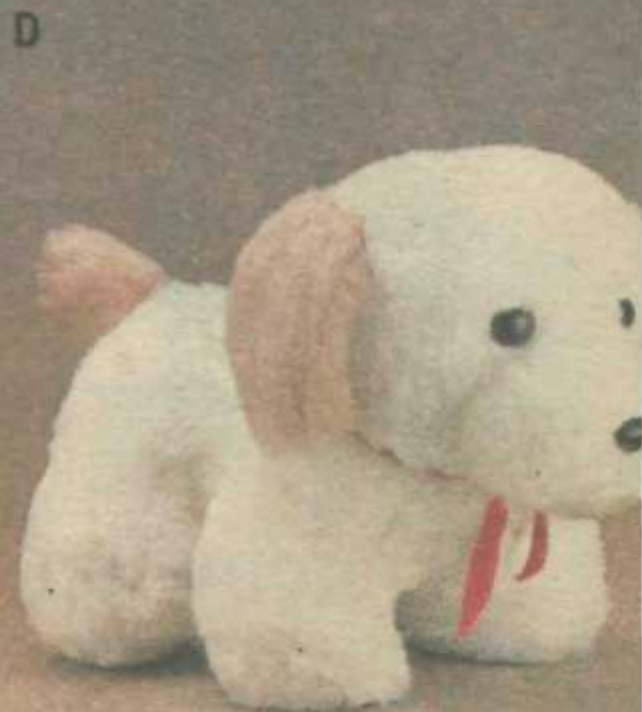
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# CHANDAMAMA

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Announcing a new serial through pictures :  
**RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA**  
Story of a great spiritual personality of all times.

\*

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Printed by B.V. REDDI at Prasad Process Private Ltd, 188 N.S.K.  
Salai, Madras 600 026 (India) and published by B. VISWANATHA REDDI on behalf of CHANDAMAMA PUBLICATIONS,  
Chandamama Buildings, Vadapalani, Madras 600 026 (India).  
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Controlling Editor:  
NAGI REDDI



Founder:  
CHAKRAPANI

## BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG

We receive letters from our readers complaining about the rise in the price of the books in the market. Even books meant for the young continue to grow costlier day by day.

Alas, it is unfortunate that such a thing should happen. In the recent years the costs of paper and printing have gone up so much that books are priced as if they were luxury items.

But, for a growing generation of intelligent boys and girls, reading is more necessary today than ever. We say it is more necessary today than ever because there is a temptation to break away from reading and watching the TV. But that is not the right thing to do. Experts have told us that there is no substitute for reading. You must read—and read good books.

We plead with the government and the publishers to find out some way to make books available to the young at reasonable prices. At least they can draw a list of true classics for children and supply them cheap.



## WHAT IS HAPPENING IN EASTERN EUROPE?

**B**y Eastern Europe we mean countries like Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia. Sometimes the German Democratic Republic and a part of the U.S.S.R. also are included in the list.

During the World War II, Germany, under its dictator Hitler and Italy under its dictator Mussolini—joined hands and conquered the countries listed first. Germany was defeated and the Allied forces liberated these countries. But were they really liberated? No. Stalin, the communist dictator of the U.S.S.R., managed to set up puppet governments in these countries. These new rulers were all communists and they owed complete allegiance to Stalin.

But the leader of Yugoslavia, Marshal Tito, did not tolerate the Soviet bossism. He defied Stalin and followed an independent

line. Others, however, continued to be faithful to the Russian leaders, even after Stalin's death. Whenever there was any rebellion against the rulers in any of these countries, it was suppressed, often with the help of the Russian army. No party other than the Communist party could have any say in the governments.

Two evils resulted from this situation. First, the people could not voice their opinions freely. Secondly, some clever individuals, in the name of the Communist party, controlled the entire government. A naked example of this was Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania. He lived like a king, amassed wealth like a greedy mad fellow and ruthlessly suppressed or killed anybody who dared to raise his voice against him. A great revolt put an end to his rule and life on the 25th of December, last year. From the one-party rule which had



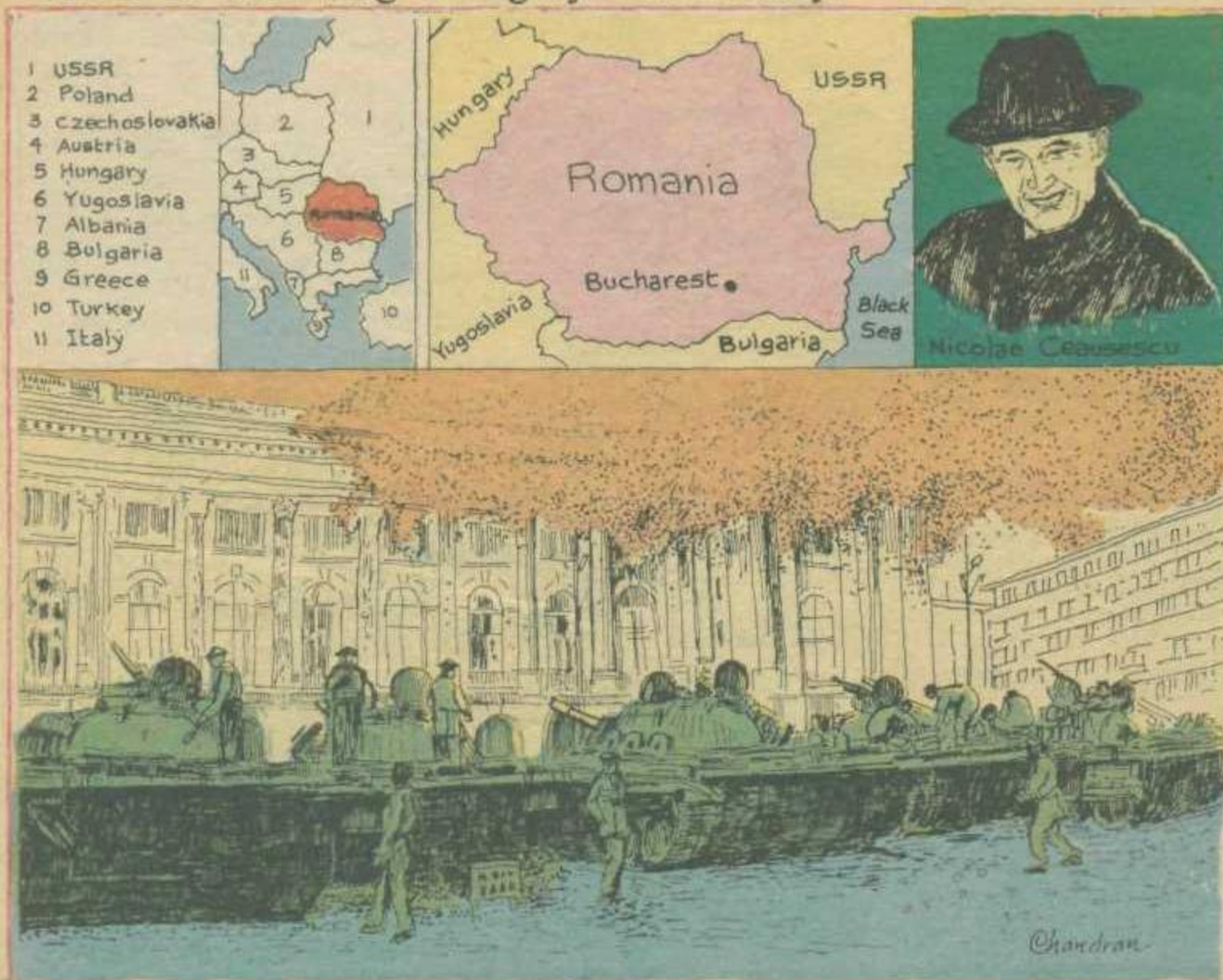
become a one-man and one-woman rule (because Ceausescu's wife too was equally powerful), Romania is now passing into a democratic rule.

The same trend is seen in all the other Eastern European countries. The people are yearning for democracy. They are rejecting the one-party system.

This trend is inspired by a great change in the U.S.S.R. Under the enlightened leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union is following a highly

liberal policy. It wants its citizens to feel free in their opinions and actions. There is no doubt that Gorbachev and his comrades will go down in history as great and good people.

From these events we should not conclude that the ideal of socialism, which the Communist parties championed, has become meaningless. Not at all. What the conscious people all over the world have realised is, socialism can be brought about through democracy.







## THE BANDIT PRINCE

7

*(Vir Singh, the usurper of the throne of Shantipur, grows a tyrant and wants to punish the old minister and a young man named Vasant who do not approve of his rule. A mysterious man saves both of them.)*

**V**ir Singh grew furious at the news of the mysterious masked man striking again and snatching Vasant from the Kotwal's custody.

"My lord, the Kotwal is ashamed of showing his face to you," the Deputy Kotwal reported to Vir Singh. The Kotwal had sent his deputy to tell this

to the false king, Vir Singh. The Kotwal had done many nasty things for Vir Singh and had betrayed his real master, King Shanti Dev. So, he hoped that Vir Singh would say, "It is all right. Let him come to me." But instead, Vir Singh said, "We are not at all eager to see his face. Rather, we shall be pleased to see

**A SECRET MEETING AT NIGHT**



his back. That is to say, let him get out of our kingdom at the earliest. We appoint you to the Kotwal's post."

The Deputy Kotwal felt like jumping with joy. But he controlled himself and fell flat before Vir Singh and kissed his feet and said, "This humble servant of yours is ready to give his life for you, my lord."

"That is what we would not like you to do, Kotwal. If you give your life so readily, we have to find yet another man for the post," said Vir Singh gravely.

"You have opened my eyes, my lord. Instead of giving my own life, I will remain ready to take the lives of those who would dare to go against you," the new Kotwal announced.

"Yes. Do so!" said Vir Singh.

The new Kotwal was more cruel than the one dismissed by Vir Singh. Also, he was anxious to prove his merit before Vir Singh. As soon as his promotion was announced, he marched into Vasant's village with a battalion of soldiers and dragged Vasant's old parents, his younger brother and his younger sister out of their home. He made them stand on the village square and at the point



of the sword, asked, "Tell me, where is Vasant?"

"All we know is, the previous Kotwal and his guards took him away!" replied Vasant's father with folded hands. A number of villagers gathered there.

"Who does not know that? I ask you to tell me where he is now! Who was that fellow who snatched him from the guards? Speak out or you shall see what I can do!" thundered the new Kotwal.

"Sir, how can we answer your question? We were not present when the mysterious man led Vasant away. We have heard that you were there on the spot, when



principality on the other side of the forest, was without a soul

Jayananda, the hermit, walked through the rain. It seemed he walked alone, but not so. He was followed by Bagha, his pet tiger. What is more, on his shoulder sat a beautiful parrot.

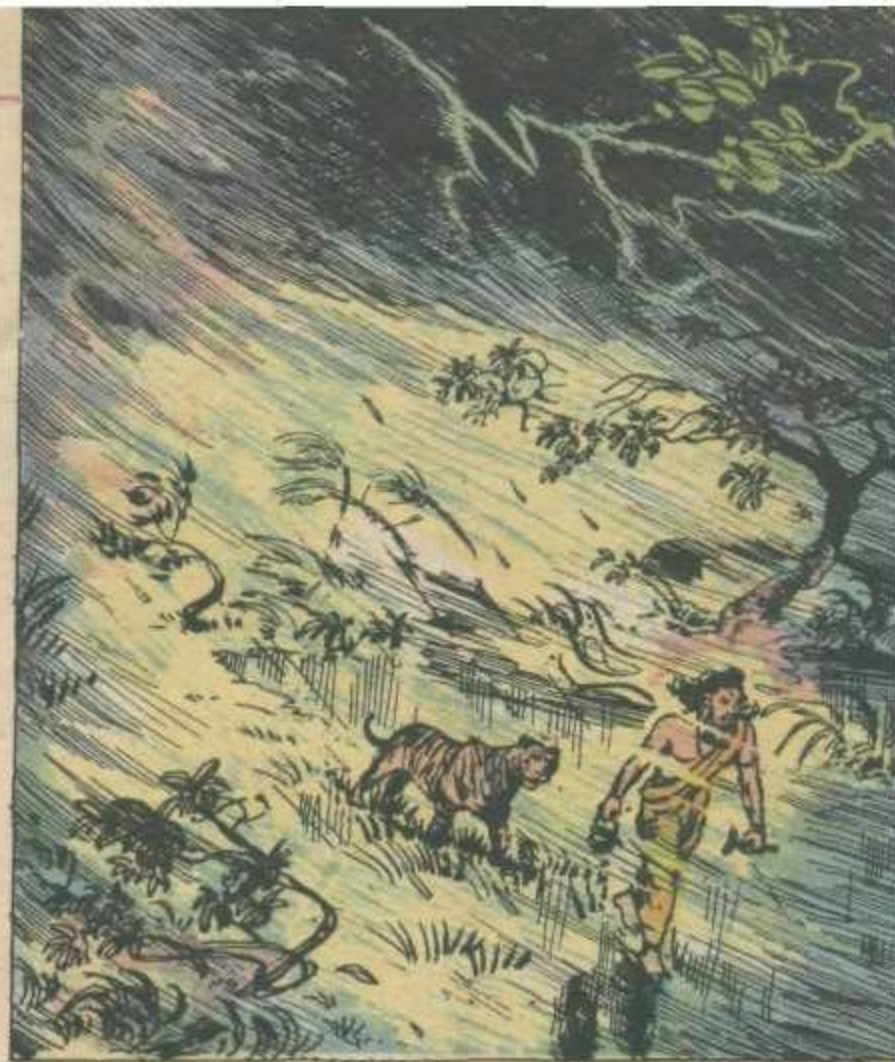
Unlike Shantipur, Jainagar was a village, not a town, even though it was the headquarters of the small principality, ruled by Shankar Verma.

Jainagar was a small land, nevertheless it was an independent territory. One side of the territory had a common frontier with Shantipur. On another side was the sea. Along the two other sides ran the great forest.

Many generations ago, a chieftain of Jainagar had saved a king of Shantipur. Since then the kings of Shantipur guaranteed the freedom of Jainagar. No enemy could attack Jainagar without passing through Shantipur.

Jayananda did not have many disciples. But among the few he had, Shankar Verma was one.

The hermit stopped in front of a temple that marked the beginning of Jainagar. "Bagha," he addressed the tiger, "be here till I



return." Then he took the parrot into his palms and said, "Malli! Fly into Babu's house and announce to him my approach."

The parrot tittered and flew away.

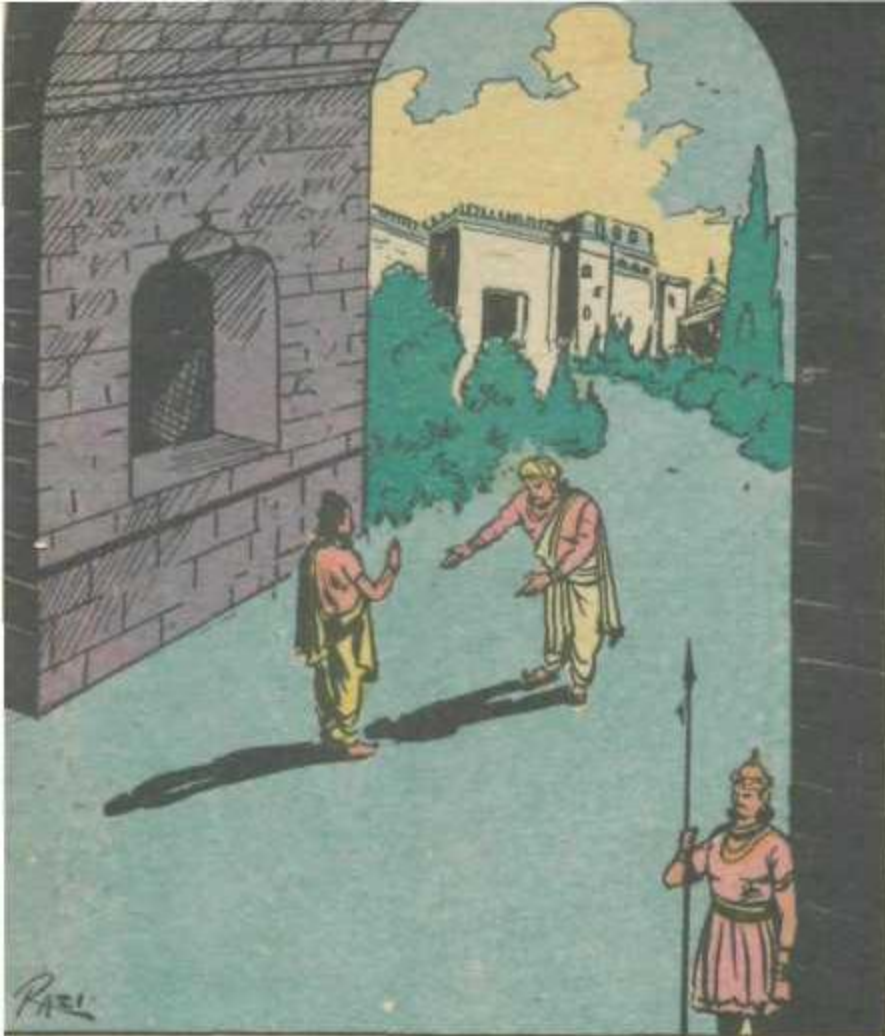
Shankar Verma, after a late dinner, was about to retire into his bed-chamber. "Babu!" he heard someone call him. He was taken aback. He knew the voice. Next moment the parrot flew down from the cornice of a pillar and perched on the chieftain's shoulder.

"Babu!"

"Yes, my dear Malli, what is it?"

"Baba!"





“Is that so?” Shankar Verma became alert. He called out to his guards and asked them to open the gates of his fortress. The hermit addressed him as Babu and Shankar Verma addressed the hermit as Baba. The parrot had completed its mission by uttering the two words!

Shankar Verma rushed to the portal of his fortress. Soon, from the darkness and drizzle emerged the smiling hermit. Shankar Verma bowed to him and said, “Baba! Why did you take the trouble of walking all the way through the rains? You could have sent Malli to summon me!”

“I could have done that,” said

the hermit while the chieftain led him into the house. “But your visit into the forest would attract greater attention than my visit to your house.”

Shankar Verma understood that his guru had to convey something in absolute confidence. He made the hermit change his wet clothes and served him with a glass of hot milk himself. Both sat face to face in an inner chamber of the fortress.

“Babu, I hear that you are quite disturbed! Is it true?” asked the hermit.

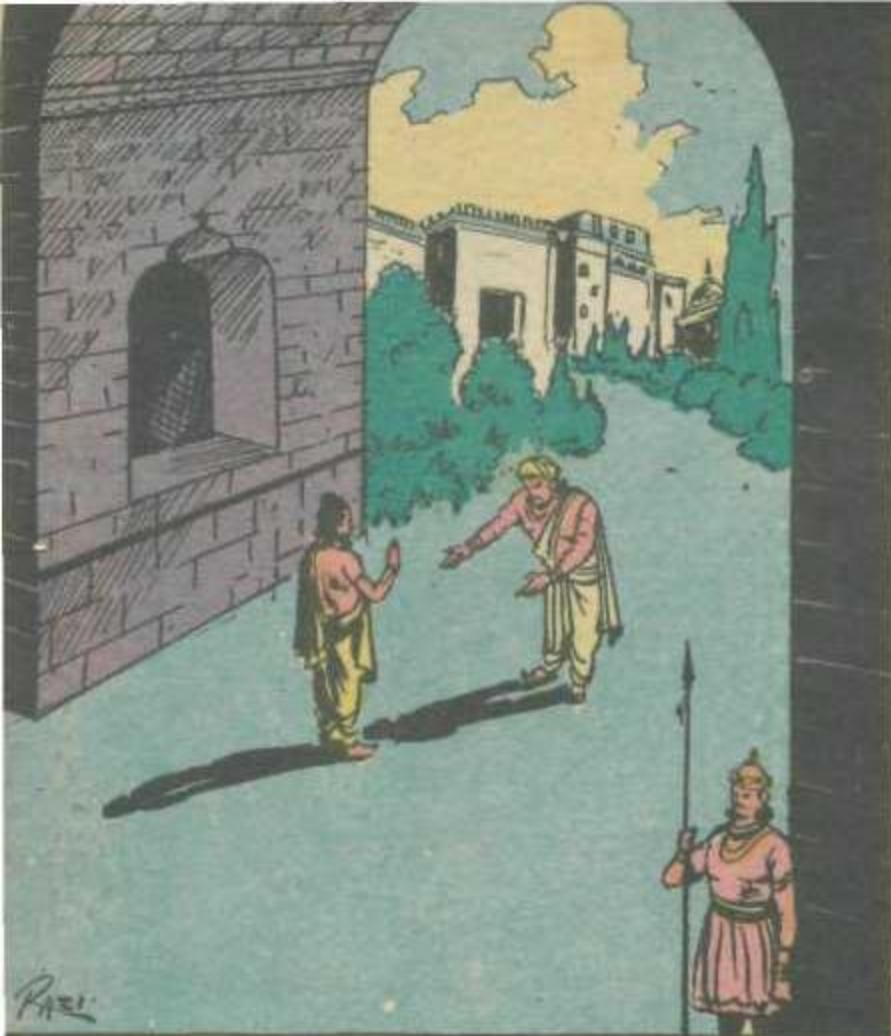
“It is true, Baba. In fact I had decided to pay a visit to you and speak to you about my fears,” said the chieftain.

“Are you disturbed on account of what is happening in the neighbouring kingdom?” asked the hermit.

“Yes, Baba. The age-old dynasty had suddenly come to an end. Though Vir Singh belongs to the same family, he is so different! Every day I receive reports of his wickedness and violence. I do not know when his greedy eyes will fall on me or on my territory.”

“Babu, the age-old dynasty has not come to an end,” said the





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hermit softly. Then he unfolded his palm. In it was the gold chain with a locket. The locket depicted the symbol of the dynasty.

Shankar Verma took the chain into his hands and examined it. His eyes showed joy and surprise. "Baba! From its size it is clear that it belonged to the little prince of Sumedh. How did it fall into your hands?" he asked.

"Babu, it fell into my hands along with its owner, the little prince. He is with me," whispered the hermit.

"What a good news! Baba, I will be happy to take charge of the boy."

"I know that. But I wonder if that will be good for the boy and yourself!" observed the hermit.

Shankar Verma fell silent.

After a moment he said, "Baba, on second thought's I see that it will be bad for both the prince and myself. Vir Singh must have planted his spies everywhere. The prince cannot be kept locked up!"

"That is right. Let him grow up in the forest, far from the locality. But you can lock up this property of the little prince. I do not wish him to wear his identity around his neck."

"I will do so, Baba. But can I do anything more?" asked Shankar Verma.

"I think you can. But wait for a while. Do not fear. We have to perform our role in putting an end to the sorrows and suffering of the people of Sumedh," said the hermit.

**To continue**







STORY OF

# BUDDHA

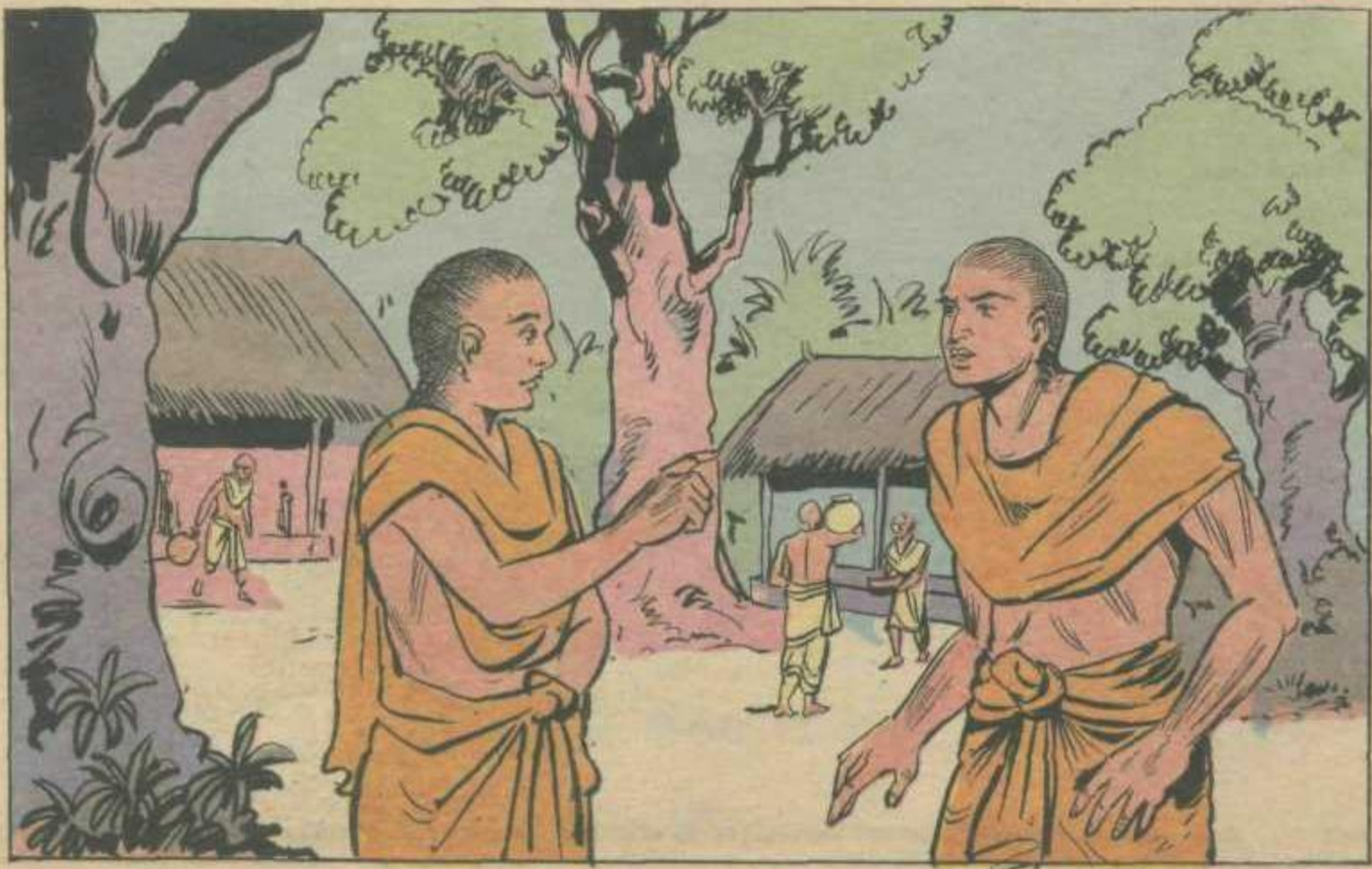
—By Manoj Das

*(The Enlightened One continues to impart lessons to the seekers despite challenges and hurdles that meet him.)*

## LESSONS FROM THE MASTER

**W**e know how Prince Rahula, the young son of the Buddha, had followed the footsteps of his father. He was intelligent and he tried his best to follow the disciplines of the Samgha, the Buddhist Order or association. But after all he was a boy and he was used to the

luxuries of his grandfather's palace. It was not easy for him to give up his habits or manners. Sometimes he would forget that he was no different from the other seekers who lived in the Samgha and would expect them to obey his command. If they did not, he would get angry and chide





them. Generally nobody took offence at his words because he was the son of their Master, but the unworthy conduct of the boy could not remain hidden from the Buddha. He sent the boy to a Samgha situated in a distant village. A year passed. The Buddha paid a visit to the village. The disciples came forward to greet him. Among them was Rahula who came with water in a vessel. He placed the vessel at the Buddha's feet. The Buddha dipped his feet in it. Thereafter the boy wiped them with a cloth and was then taking away the vessel when the Buddha observed, "It is a fine vessel!"

"Indeed, my lord, it is a fine vessel," said Rahula.

"But can you offer the water it now contains to anybody to drink?" asked the Buddha.

"No, my lord, for it has become dirty," said Rahula.

"That is right, my boy. Even if the pot holding the water is beautiful, one would reject the water if it is dirty. The same is the case with a man and his mind. One may be young and handsome and come of noble stock, but if one is quarrelsome or arrogant or disrespectful to others, nobody would appreciate





him," observed the Buddha.

"That is right, my lord," said the boy. He then went and threw the water away. He was passing by the Buddha with the vessel when the Master asked him, "Now it is ready for holding fresh water, isn't it so?"

"It is so, my lord."

"Good. So, never it is too late. One can throw one's unworthy habits away and think, speak and behave in a gentle manner. There by one can endear oneself to all," said the Buddha.

"I understand, my lord."

"Now, what would happen if the vessel falls from your hand?"

asked the Buddha.

"It will break into pieces, my lord."

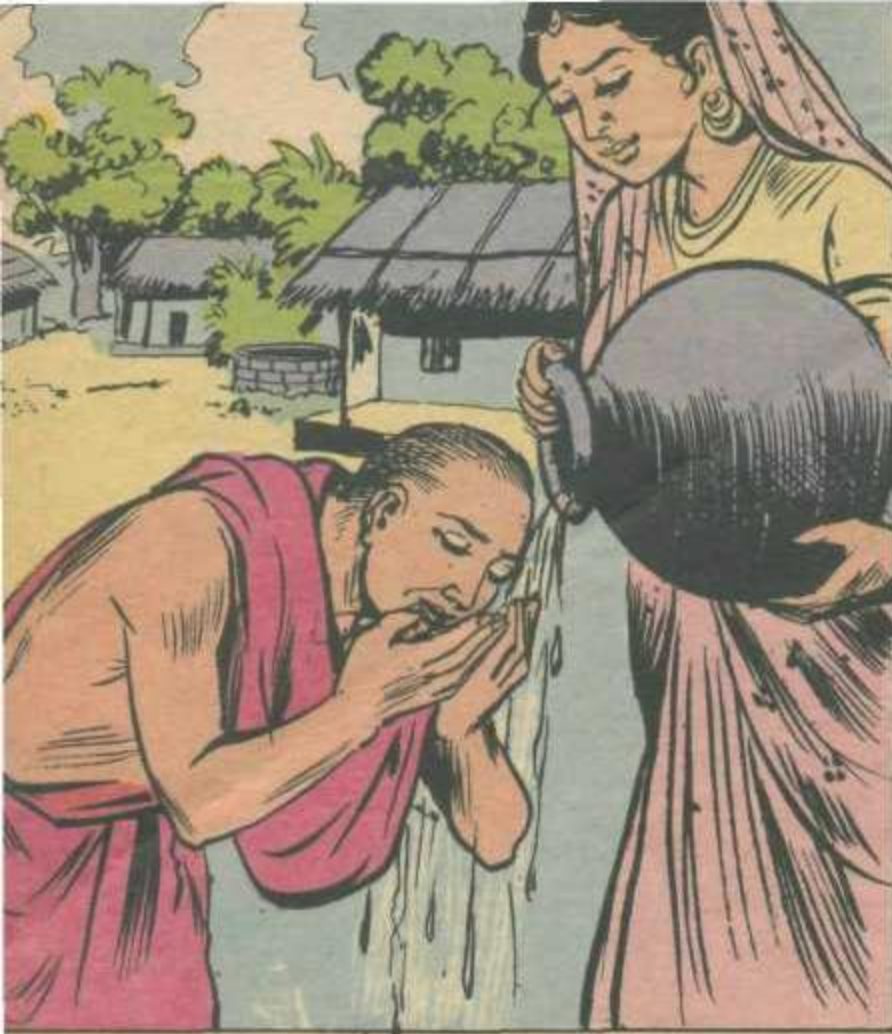
"Similarly, any accident, any disease can shatter one's body, any moment. We ought to remember this so that we can give importance to that which cannot be shattered, which will continue to live and find another body when this body is gone. Am I clear?" asked the Buddha.

"Yes, my lord," said Rahula humbly. And never again was he rude in his manners. He became a most disciplined member of the community.

One day a disciple asked the







Buddha, "Sir, when a man comes to you for the first time, you talk to him not like a Master, but like a courteous man of the society. You ask us to look into his comforts and to entertain him with food. But these are mere formalities. You are a great Teacher. Why should you follow the norms of the ordinary society?"

"It is true that these are mere formalities and have not much value in regard to my mission. But let me explain to you why I observe them. One day a man returned from work and saw that his house was on fire while his two little children were busy

playing inside the house along with two other children of the neighbourhood.

'Children, come out and see how wonderful toys are here!' shouted the man. The children rushed out. The man showed them a vendor of toys who was passing by and then began to extinguish the fire. Had the man first shouted 'Fire! fire!!' the children would not have responded to his call. They were too young to understand what fire had to do with their play. But the toy is dear to them. Their attraction for toys saved them from a dangerous situation. People who come to me for the first time may not know the value of my teaching. They are accustomed to social norms. I receive them with courtesies the value of which they understand. Then, if they deserve to be taught, I teach them."

Among the most dedicated and wise disciples of the Buddha was one named Ananda. One day Ananda was passing through a village. He saw a young lady returning from the river, holding a pitcher. "I am thirsty. Can you give me some water to drink?" he asked her.



The young lady observed him and said apologetically, "I am sorry that I cannot oblige you, because I belong to a lower caste!"

"But I asked for water, not for your caste!" said Ananda and he knelt down, spreading his palms.

The young lady was surprised. She poured water into Ananda's palms and he drank to his heart's content. Then he thanked her and went away. The young lady kept gazing at the luminous figure of the ascetic, with wonder and appreciation.

She saw him passing through her village several times thereafter and developed a great fondness for him. One day she followed him and reached the park in which the Buddha resided. She waited for a long time. When she saw that the Buddha was alone,

she went near him and bowed to him and, pointing at Ananda, said, "I love this young man for his nobility and his courage. I will like to marry him."

"My daughter, what you love are the qualities of nobility and courage. Continue to love them. Love also other similar virtues. They will bring you true joy. If you marry Ananda, you would only do what millions have done before you. You will live like an ordinary woman, tied to the attachments of the world. You would reduce Ananda to the level of an ordinary householder. Should your love for virtues end up in that kind of situation?" said the Buddha.

The young lady understood the value of the Buddha's message.

- -To continue





# THE GREATEST TEACHER AVAILABLE FREE



Birbal had a neighbour, who had a little son. The boy was very naughty. Birbal advised the neighbour to employ a tutor for the boy. The neighbour was wealthy but he was a miser.

However, willy-nilly he employed a teacher. The teacher was to receive ten mohurs a month and have his daily lunch at the miser's house. He began his work in right earnest.



The miser was happy. But one day he observed the teacher eating his lunch. The teacher ate too much. The miser was very unhappy.

Three months passed. The teacher received no salary. At last he reminded the miser about his dues. "Nothing is due to you!" said the miser.





The teacher complained to Birbal. "Don't you worry!" said Birbal. "I will make him pay you for the past three months. You need not work for him any longer."



Bita Ram



Birbal met the miser who told him that the teacher ate too much! "Pay him off. Tomorrow I will bring you one of the greatest teachers who will neither eat a morsel nor demand any salary."

The teacher was paid. He thanked the miser and went away and found teaching work elsewhere. The miser waited for the greatest teacher to arrive.



Next day Birbal carried a small earthen image of the Buddha to the miser. "Nobody can deny the fact that the Buddha is one of the greatest teachers of mankind. And this teacher would claim no lunch, no salary," he said.



# THE COURTIER'S MANSION

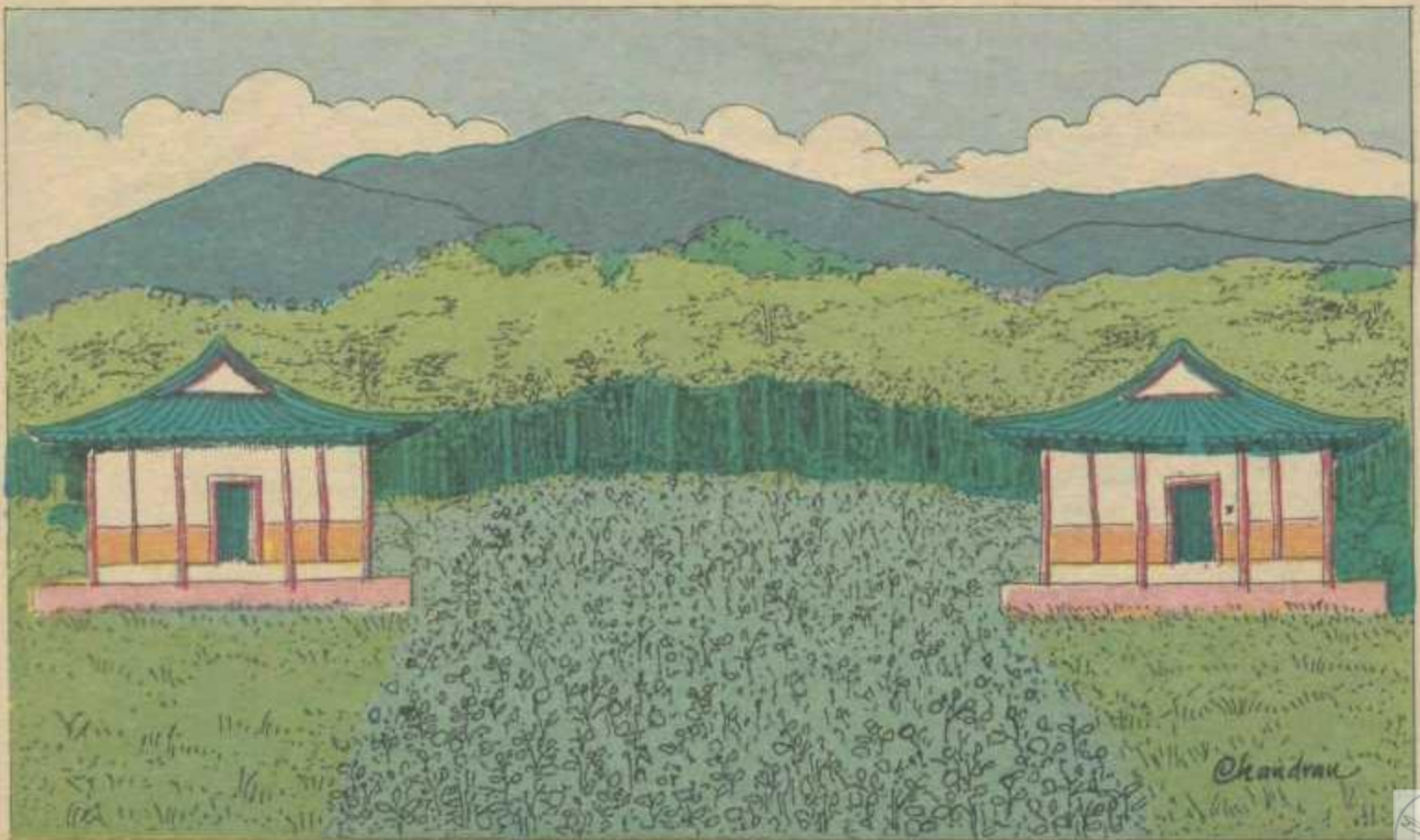
In days gone by a courtier of the king could choose any spot in the city to build his house upon it. A gentleman who had been recently promoted to the rank of a courtier chose a ground between two houses belonging to two brothers. One of them was a carpenter and the other one was a blacksmith.

The ground belonged to both the brothers and they used it for growing vegetables or holding ceremonies. Their children

played on it. When the courtier demanded the ground from them, they requested him to spare it.

"No. This is an ideal place for me to build my house. You will be given compensation," the courtier said. The officer who decided the amount of compensation was another courtier. He fixed the value at one tenth of its real market value.

The two brothers sulked under the injustice done to them, but





could do nothing about it. The courtier built a magnificent house and moved into it.

But before long he realised that his had not been a wise decision. From one side of his house was heard the continuous sound made by the carpenter and his assistants, chopping, chisselling and polishing wood. From the other side came the sound of the blacksmith's hammer. Sometimes the two neighbours worked late into the night and the courtier and the members of his family could not sleep properly.

According to the law of the land, a courtier could ask a

neighbour to move his house provided he gave a certain fixed amount to the neighbour. He called the carpenter and asked him to move his house.

"Sir, where shall I go? My customers know my house and come with their orders here. If I move my house, my business will suffer," pleaded the carpenter.

"I will give you more money than you are entitled to. But move you must," said the courtier.

"Please give me in writing that you will not ask me to move again, once I move my house," said the carpenter.





"Are you mad? Why should I ask you to move again? Anyway, I don't mind giving the assurance to you in writing just for your satisfaction," said the courtier. He wrote down the condition and paid him more than the amount usually given in such cases.

Next day he called the blacksmith and said the same thing to him. The blacksmith also protested in the manner of his brother. But he too was given more money than he was entitled to and an assurance in writing that he shall not be asked to move again.

There was no sound from either the blacksmith's house or the carpenter's house the next day. The courtier was very happy. He slept at night peacefully.

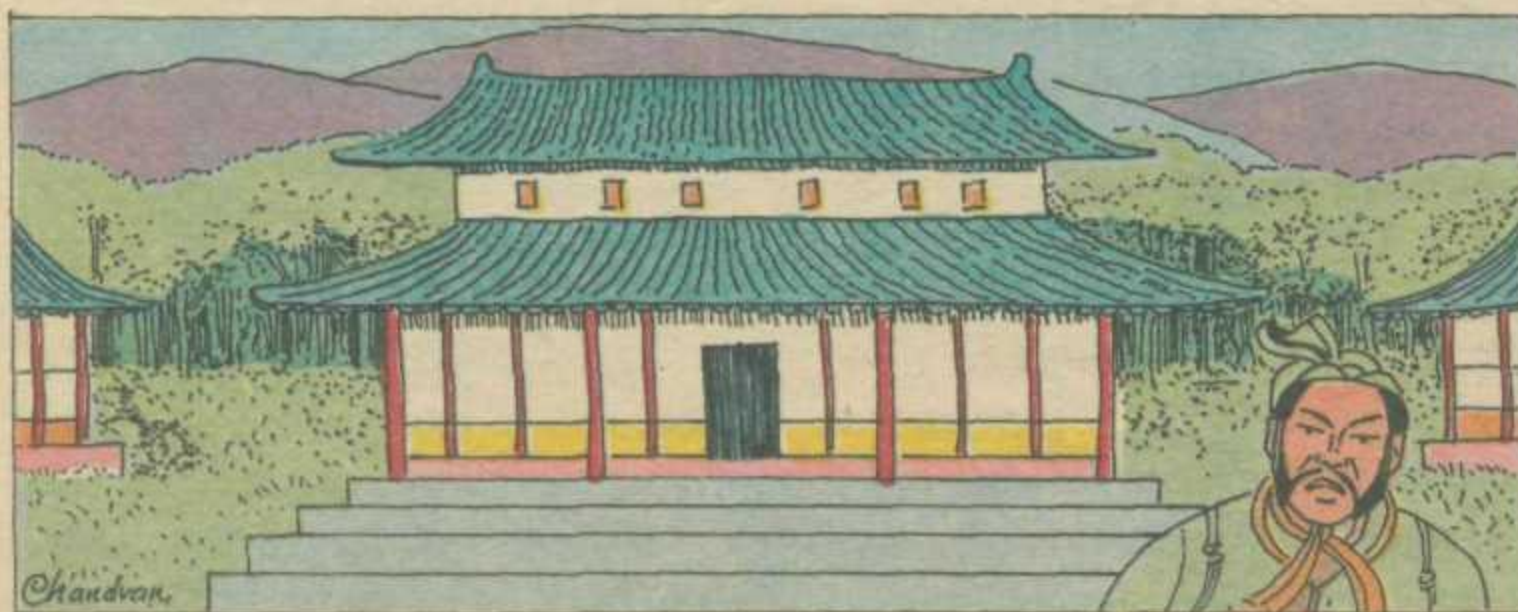
But his sleep was disturbed

early in the morning. The same sounds began coming from both the sides of his house.

"What is the matter? Have my neighbours not moved their houses?" he asked his servants. The servants went out to look into the situation. They came back after a while and told the courtier, "Sir, they have moved their houses all right. The carpenter has moved into the house deserted by the blacksmith and the blacksmith has moved into the house deserted by the carpenter."

The courtier felt like banging his head on the wall. But he could not ask his neighbours to move their houses again!

He sold his new house, very cheap, to the two brothers and moved away to another locality.







## THE DONKEY MEETS THE BEAR

**T**he village was situated near a range of hills and the villagers cultivated grapes. Their vineyards were near the hills. The grapes were sweet and the villagers ate them with relish and sold the surplus at good price.

But a bear began to pay regular visits to the vineyards. It made a meal of the grapes.

Now, the village-chief had a donkey which was absolutely good-for-nothing. One evening the chief gave him a beating and drove it into the meadow. From the hill-top the bear saw him and thought, "Quite a bellyful of meat awaits me tonight! In any case, I have not clawed anything for long. My nails are aching."

And it being a moonlit night, the donkey too could see the bear. He knew that his life was in danger. But he told himself,

"Now is the time to prove that donkeys are not necessarily foolish."

"Hello bear! Why don't you come here? I've been waiting for you for hours!" shouted the donkey.

The bear was surprised. "Why should you wait for me?" he asked.

"Well, to carry you into the village, of course! Why, don't you know that you are to become the village-chief for this year?" asked the donkey.

"To become the village-chief? Why on earth should I be given that position?" asked the bear though the secret ambition within him was inspired.

"Do you ask why? Don't you know that one who eats the maximum quantity of grapes in a season becomes the village



chief?" asked the donkey.

Now the bear was left in no doubt that he deserved that chair! Indeed he had eaten, more grapes than all the villagers together might have eaten!

"Come on, sir, sit on my back and we go! The garland the villagers have made for you should not be allowed to lose its lustre!" said the donkey.

Well, the bear had a great desire to be garlanded. He lost no time in jumping on to the donkey's back.

It was not easy for the donkey to carry the load. But the village was not far either! As soon as he was on the village road he began braying. Villagers came out of their homes, surprised. Their surprise knew no bounds when they saw the bear riding the

donkey!

The bear, far from running away, waited for the garland.

Of course, what fell on him was not a garland, but a net. He was captured.

"I don't know why I was mad enough to believe that I was to become the village-chief! My father had never become one, nor had my grandfather!" the bear thought. But it was a bit too late for such thoughts.

The villagers sold the bear to a circus party. So far as the chief's donkey was concerned, the villagers commented, "Who said it is good-for-nothing? It is the most brilliant donkey our village had ever had!"

And the donkey moved about freely in the village like a guardian!







## THE WAY

**A**charya Ajay Dev, a sage, was on his way to the city of Vidyapuri, the capital of the kingdom. He had been invited by the king to preside over a conference of scholars.

He was accompanied by his disciple. They had to cross a forest. It was not a dense forest and a distinct road passed through it. But at one place they saw that the road had been bifurcated. One branch went to the east; the other towards the west.

The sage and the disciple did not know which road to take. Under a banyan tree two young men sat playing chess. They were quarrelling on some rule of chess-playing. When they fell silent for a while, the sage asked them, "Which road should we take in order to reach Vidya-

puri?"

"Take the eastward road. You will reach the bank of the river Sipra. You have to cross the river to reach the city," said one young man.

"No, no, no. Take the westward road and you will reach your destination," said the second young man.

The sage and the disciple looked at each other. Their problem remained as it was. They did not know which road to take.

"Well, my young friends, can you tell me the name of the king?" asked the sage.

"Uttam Verma," said the first young man.

"No, no, no. It is Surya Verma," said the second young man.

"Come on," the sage told his disciple. "Let us take to the





eastward road.”

They proceeded along the road and after two hours reached the Kali temple on the river-bank. The king's boat was already waiting for them. But, at the priest's request, they waited there for the *Prasad* of the deity.

As they sat under a tree, the disciple asked the sage, “Sir, how did you know that the direction given by the first young man was correct?”

“First of all, he spoke spontaneously and calmly. Secondly, he spoke about the river. This meant, he knew exactly how to reach Vidyapuri. Even then, in

order to be sure that he spoke facts, I asked him the king's name. He answered correctly,” said the sage.

“Why was the other fellow trying to misguide us?” asked the disciple.

“Both of them had quarrelled over the chess. The mood to oppose the first young man was still there in the second. That is why, whatever the first young man said, the second one said something different from it. That is all. He did not bother about our convenience,” explained the sage.

Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened.

—Winston Churchill



**CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-17**

**TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE**

## WHO IS HE?

A Sultan of Delhi was out for conquest. He conquered several territories, suppressed some rebellious rulers and was marching back to Delhi, feeling quite proud.

There lived a sage in Delhi of those days. The Sultan had a dislike for the sage. Someone met the sage and told him that the Sultan was returning to the city and it would be good if the sage leaves the place.

But the sage said, "Delhi is still far!" Those near the sage were surprised to hear the sage saying so, because the Sultan was already entering the city!

Alas! The Sultan could never enter the city. A great arch built to welcome him collapsed on him, killing him on the spot.

Who was the sage and who was the Sultan?

## DO YOU KNOW?

1. Which is the language spoken by the largest number of people in the world?
2. What is the first book of geometry in the world?
3. What is the average life-span of an Indian today?
4. Which country is the largest producer of sugar in the world?
5. Which country is the largest producer of films in the world?



**INDIA: THEN AND NOW**

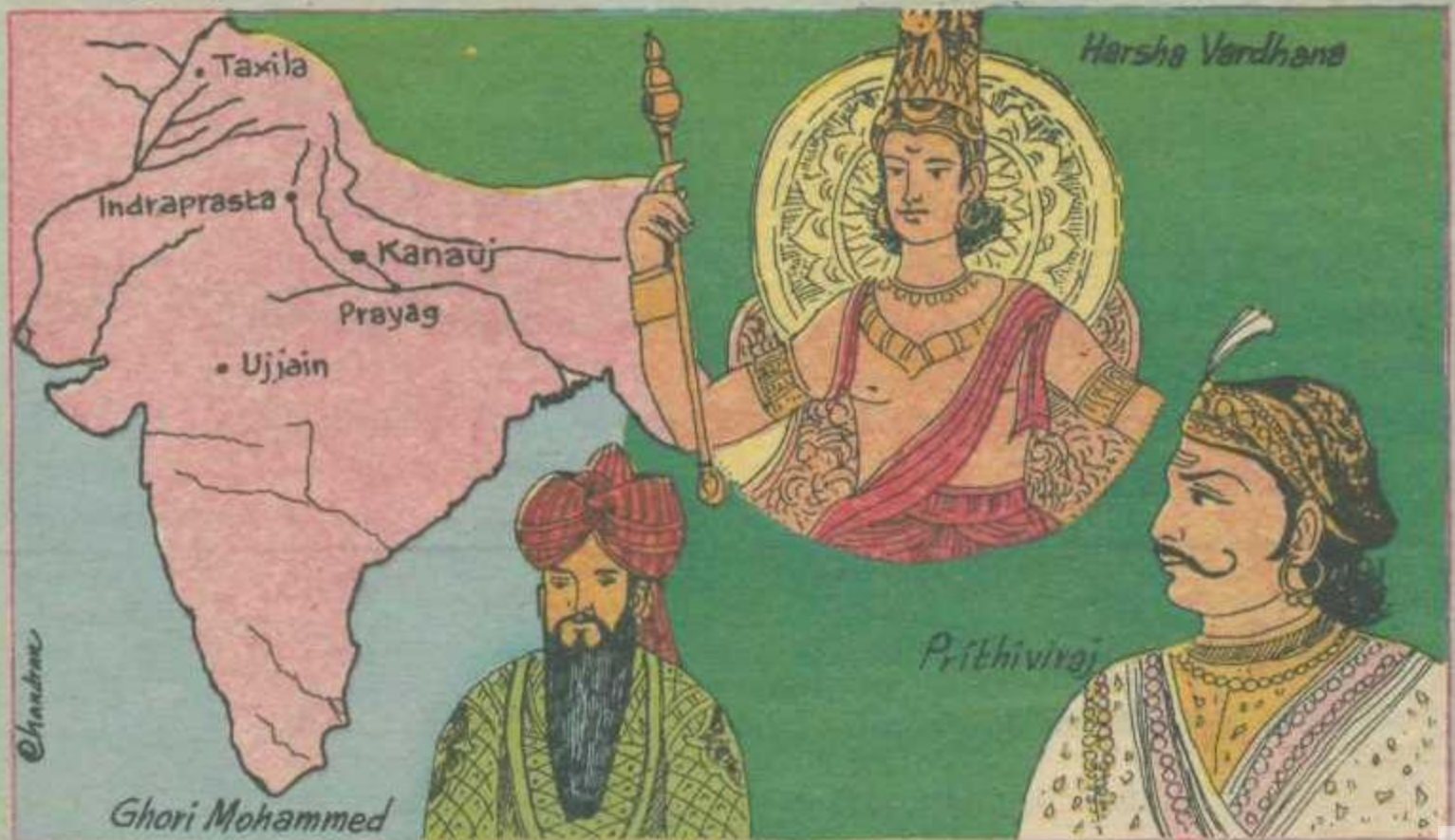
# **KANAUJ THAT WAS KANYA KUBJA**

Heaps of ruins occupying a semicircle seven km. in diameter are all that remains as witness to the great past of Kanauj in Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh. Today it is a small town.

Once upon a time, in the age of the Mahabharata and prior to that, this was the capital of a great kingdom. Kanauj was then known as Kanya Kubja. In 7th century, it was a city resounding with the sounds of conchshells and gongs from hundreds of

Hindu temples and Buddhist monasteries. Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese seeker, visited it in A.D. 636 and lived there for seven years. The most famous of kings to rule from here was Harshavardhana (A.D. 606-647). He changed Kanya Kubja into a beautiful city, marked by lakes, parks, wide roads and rest-houses for travellers.

Early in the 11th century, Sultan Mahmud raided the city and destroyed much of it. After that the Rathor kings rebuilt it.



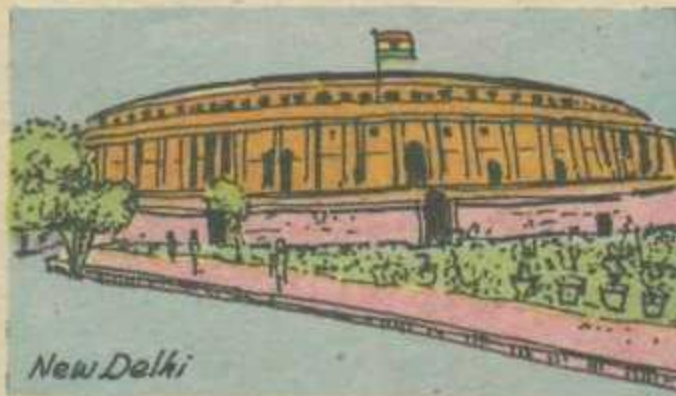


But, unfortunately, the last Rathor king, Jaichandra, in order to wreak vengeance on Prithviraj, the king of Ajmer and Delhi, invited Muhammad Ghuri of Ghaznavid. This he did because his daughter, Samyukta, married Prithviraj against his wish. Ghuri marched upon Delhi, hopeful of an easy victory. But Prithviraj stopped him on the outskirts of the city. A fierce war followed. Ghuri was not only defeated, but also captured.

However, Prithviraj did not kill him, but let him go back. The humiliated Ghuri, again encouraged by Jaichandra, returned with a much larger army. He defeated and killed Prithviraj. However, later he attacked his host Jaichandra who was defeated and killed by Ghuri's lieutenant, Qutb-ud-din in A.D. 1112.

Kanauj, after this invasion, was no longer the same.

## NEWS FLASH



New Delhi

### ***Must We Breathe Posion?***

Breathing the air in Bombay has the same harmful effect of smoking ten cigarettes a day. Such is the polluted atmosphere of the city!

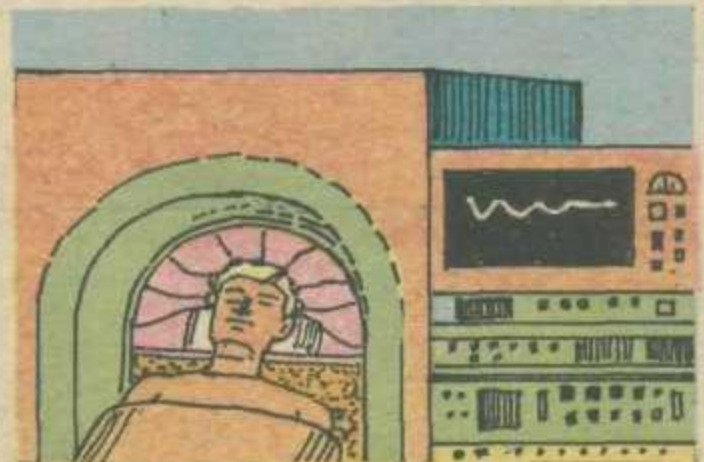
New Delhi does not lag far behind. It is one of the ten worst polluted cities in the world. This is from the report of a survey made by experts.

It is high time we must put pressure on everybody who has some authority—be he in the government or in industry—to help undo the awful situation.

### ***New Life-Saving Machine***

Can one be trapped under icy water for full half-an-hour and still escape death?

Murray Brown of Las Vegas not only looked dead when he was rescued from terribly cold rushing water, but his brain too had stopped functioning. But a new machine invented by Dr. Larry Gentilello which rewarms a person in a special way, revived him within a few hours. This is considered a medical miracle.





# LET US EXPLORE THE WORLD OF LITERATURE

1. Two famous children's classics were actually written for adults. What are they?
2. What are the names of the two parts of the Bible?
3. How many books are there in the first part?
4. How many books are there in the second part?
5. What is the longest work of poetry in the world?

## ANSWERS

### Who Is He ?

Nizamuddin. The Sultan was Ghiyas-ud-din.

### General Knowledge

1. Chinese
2. *Sulba Sutra*, written in the 8th century B.C. in India.
3. 54 years.
4. India.
5. India.

### Literature

1. Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*.
2. *Old Testament* and *New Testament*.
3. 39.
4. 27.
5. The Mahabharata.



## THE LITTLE CREATURE AND THE BIG CRISIS

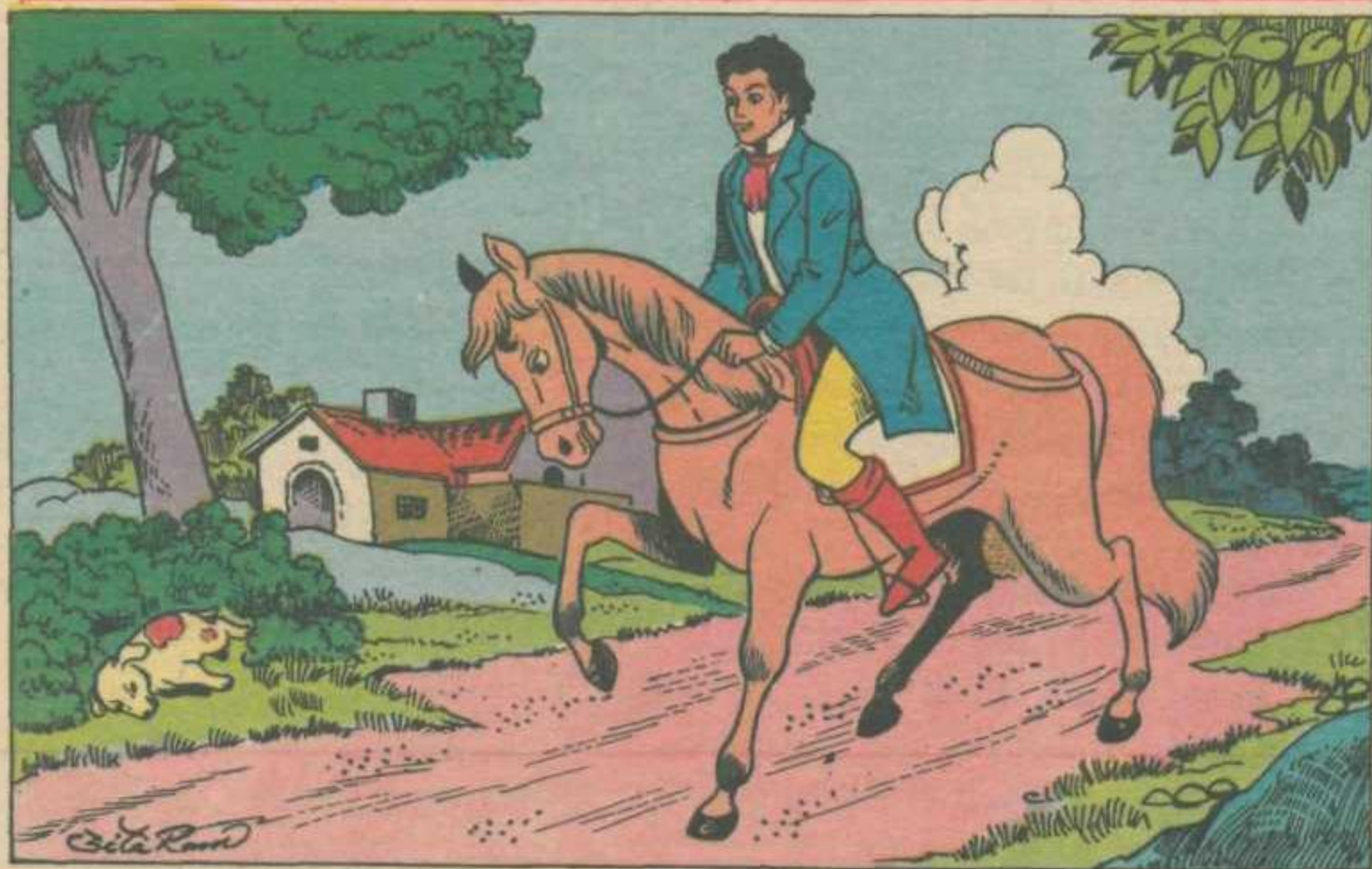
The kind-hearted Tom was the young master of an estate. His house was on the river-bank, a furlong away from the village. The orchards, gardens and corn-fields which surrounded his house belonged to him.

Tom was married to Liz. She was a beautiful young lady who helped her husband in managing the estate. Behind their house were a row of rooms occupied by their servants. Farther behind it were sheds in which were kept a pair of horses, cattle, pigs and a brood of fowls. The couple had

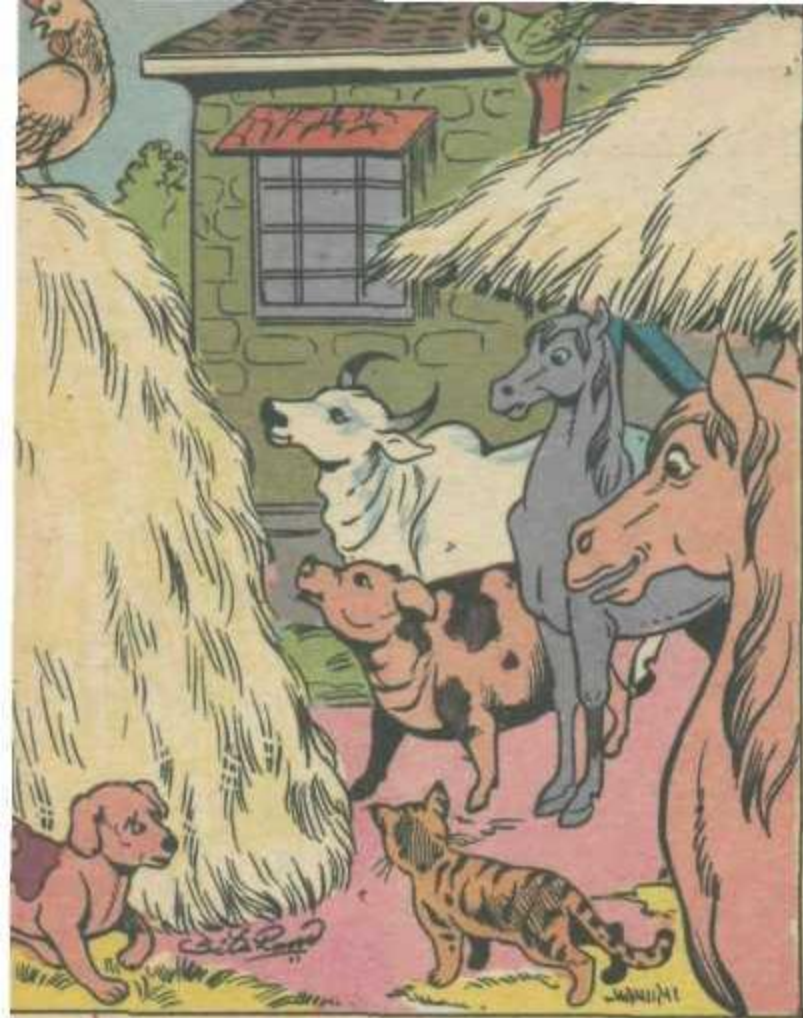
also three or four cats and a parrot.

One day Tom was returning from the nearby village, riding his horse, when he saw a puppy lying near a bush, evidently hungry and thirsty. It had hardly any energy in it even to give out a whimper.

Tom got down and picked up the puppy and took it home, placing it carefully on the horse-back before him. At home he fed the puppy and made it comfortable. His servants began to take care of it and fed it as they fed the







other animals. Tom almost forgot about it.

The puppy slowly grew up. One day it strolled into the backyard between the servants' quarters and the animal-shed, because it thought that that is where it should pass its time. But it was pained to see that the other animals did not take to him kindly. "Here is a good-for-nothing chap who enjoyed a ride on my back the other day," said a horse.

"You should have trampled on it!" commented the other horse.

"That would have been the right thing to do! But our master pulled my reins and stopped me and himself picked it up. What

could have I done?" lamented the first horse.

"This chap unnecessarily shares the food meant for us," observed a cat who had followed the dog, "I have never seen it even chasing a cockroach away, what to speak of rats!"

"I wonder what benefit it brings to our master!" said a cow. "It just loiters about. I think to keep a dog or two is a fashion with landlords," an old pig contributed to the discussion.

"Right, what they call the status-symbol!" observed the parrot who had happened to come there and perch itself on a pole. "I wish it could talk like the human beings as I do," she added.

The animals did not like the parrot's comment because none of them could talk like the human beings. But they could not rebuff the parrot because after all she was joining them in making fun of the little dog!

"I wonder why the creature does not announce the sunrise as I do!" said a cock from the top of a straw-heap.

"Well, well, it is not easy to serve a human master! One has to have some talent for it," observed



the first horse.

"Our master had just picked it up out of pity. But he has already forgotten all about it. If he sees it again, he may just hoot it away!" said the second horse.

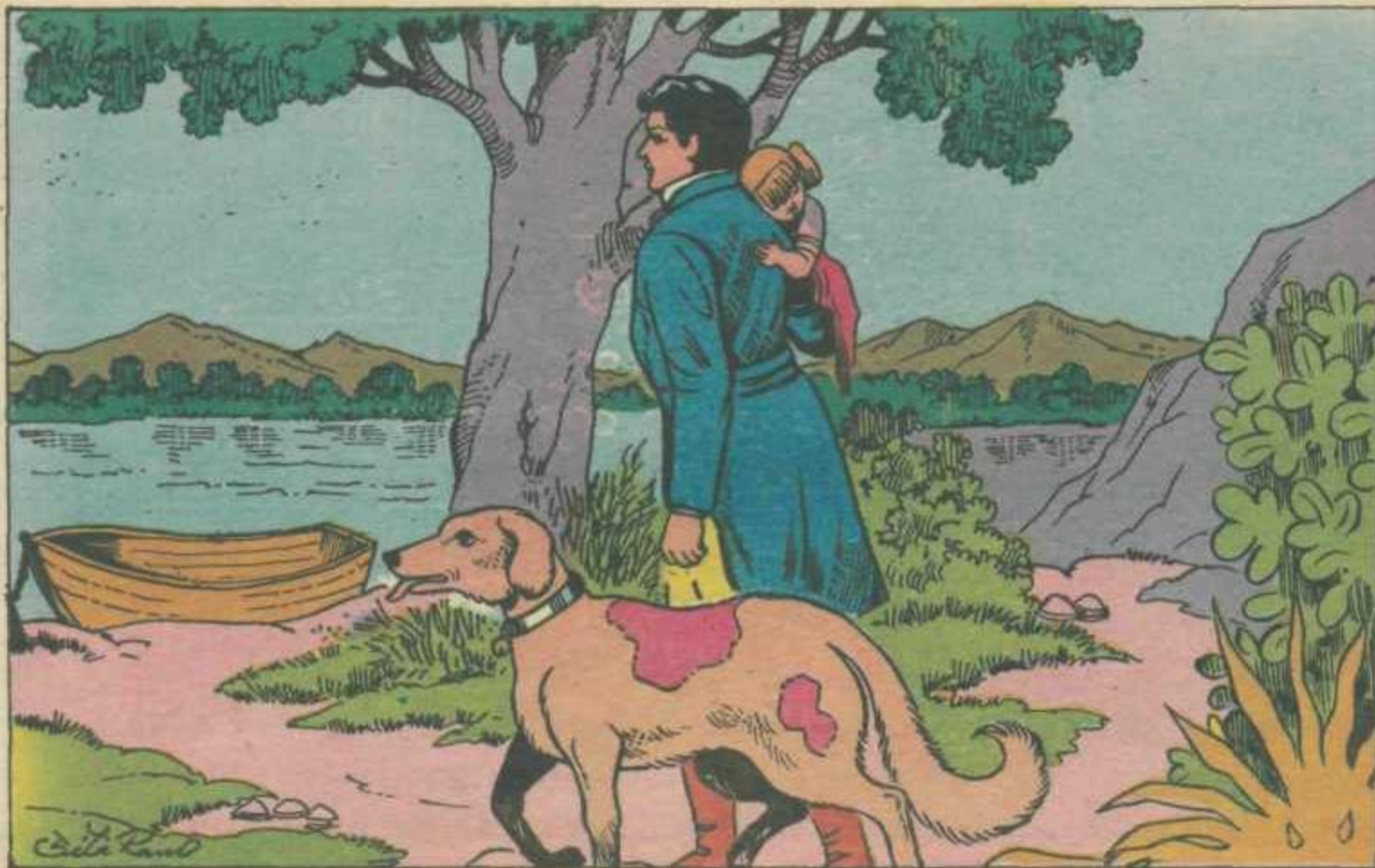
The dog slunk away from the backyard and retired into a corner of the courtyard and lay down. It felt very sad for being so useless and such an object of contempt.

Days passed. But whenever the dog went to the backyard, the other domestic creatures made fun of it. The dog kept aloof from them and whenever its master was out for a stroll, it followed him with love and respect.

Tom had a three-year old

daughter. One day he walked in his orchard holding the child in his arms. There was a small boat on the river, close to the bank. It belonged to Tom. He used it to go to a patch of land amidst the river which belonged to him. It was like a tiny island. Inside the boat was kept a long chain. By fastening its end to a tree, one could propel the boat into the river. There was no danger of the boat drifting away beyond the range of the chain.

Tom put the child, which had fallen asleep, on the boat and climbed a tree for plucking ripe guavas. He had not noticed that the rope with which the boat was usually tied to a pole had been





snapped.

A tide was entering the river. The boat began to drift. It went midstream and then was led away by the current.

The dog somehow felt that something was wrong with the boat speeding away with the child. It barked, running between the guava tree and the river. Tom now saw what was happening. He jumped from the tree, but then did not know what to do.

His wife had been to the village. One of the servants had accompanied her while the other two were in the bazar for repairing their cart. Nobody would hear him even if he shouted. He did not know how to swim and the water was quite deep. From the shed the horses, the cattle, the parrot and the dog looked on with distress.


The dog observed his master's

panic. There was a splash. It jumped into the river. It swam and reached the boat and tried to push it towards the shore. But that was not possible. Then it climbed into the boat. There was the chain lying coiled in a corner. It was fixed to the boat. The dog clamped its teeth on the loose end of the chain and jumped out and swam to the shore. Tom was already in waist-deep water. He took the chain's end from the dog and began pulling the boat. Slowly the boat came ashore. He took the sleeping child as well as the wet dog into his arms and hurried home. He wiped the dog dry and fed it with milk and bread.

An hour later the beasts in the backyard were surprised to see the dog held by their master close to his bosom. Never again they passed unkind comments on it.







New Tales of King Vikram  
and the Vampire

## THE THREE BLUNDERS

**D**ark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Gusts of wind shook the trees. At the intervals of thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke, "O King, are you aspiring to master some magical power? Such powers, even if you achieve them, are not likely to bring any true satisfaction to you. Let me give you an illustration of my point. Pay attention to it. It might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: A century or so ago, the kingdom of Ananga was ruled by King Chandradev. He used to take very keen interest in Tantra and wizardry. But he had never met any truly





gifted Tantrik.

The king was suffering from insomnia or sleeplessness. He had tried so many medicines, but nothing cured him. He felt that he might go mad at that rate. One day a young Tantrik met him and offered to cure him of his suffering. The king gave him permission to try. The Tantrik performed certain rites and taught the king to recite a certain hymn. The king began to enjoy sound sleep.

The king was very happy with the young man. He requested him to live in his kingdom. Said the young man, "I have no objection to living in your kingdom, but not in your capital. I

need some lonely place."

Not far from the capital was a lovely valley between a row of hills and a river. As desired by the king, the Tantrik made that place his residence. Soon the common people living in small villages near the valley were attracted to him. The young Tantrik helped them in many ways. He cured many people of their diseases and gave education to their children. He even mediated between quarrelling parties and brought peace among them. Of course, for some hours in the day and some hours at night he liked to be left alone for his Tantrik practices. The people also saw to it that nobody disturbed him during those hours.

A year passed. It was observed that the princess, Kanak Kumari, was suffering from fits. She fainted two or three times a day. The court-physician treated her, but there was no sign of improvement in her. No physician in the kingdom was more efficient than the court-physician. Since he could not cure the princess, the king, instead of wasting time with any other physician, summoned the Tantrik.

The Tantrik performed a Yajna for the princess in the inner





courtyard of the palace. It continued for fifteen days. The princess got well. No longer was she subject to fits.

The king was very happy. "What reward would satisfy you?" he asked the Tantrik.

The Tantrik told the king in confidence, "I come of noble stock. Because of my great interest in the Tantra, I left my home and went through long, strenuous discipline to achieve some powers. I am no longer interested in this. I think I can be of greater service to the people by assisting you in your administration. If you have no objection, I would like to marry the princess."

The king was not prepared to hear such a proposal. On the previous day, the minister had proposed his son's marriage with the princess and the king had promised to consider the proposal. Since the princess was his only child, the one to marry her would succeed him to the throne. The king grew thoughtful.

"My lord, I don't want you to give your decision immediately. Please consider my humble proposal coolly. I will meet you after a month," said the Tantrik before taking leave of the king.

A fortnight after this the



minister whispered to the king, "My lord, I am afraid, the young Tantrik may create problems for us. He is growing very popular. The people adore him and they would do anything at his bidding. According to the laws of diplomacy, nobody should be allowed to grow more popular than the king. You may summon the Tantrik and ask him to leave the kingdom."

The king sent a messenger to the Tantrik asking him to come to the court. The Tantrik told the messenger, "I have promised to the king that I will meet him soon. I will do so."

The Tantrik met the king after an interval of a month as he had



said earlier. The king told him, "Young man, we have taken an unpleasant decision for some reasons which I cannot disclose. We must ask you to leave our kingdom."

"My lord, I will obey you. But you have to repent afterwards," said the Tantrik. Then he went away.

There was sensation and anxiety in the palace when it became evening. The princess was not found either in the palace or in any of the gardens. The minister was sure that the Tantrik had whisked her away through his wizardry.

Soldiers galloped to the valley to trace the Tantrik. He was not

there. A search was made throughout the kingdom and also in the neighbouring kingdoms, but in vain.

After a week the king announced that whoever can find the princess would be eligible to marry the princess!

Several young men went out in quest of the princess, but none had any success.

The king gave up eating and sleeping and lay prostrate before his family deity, praying for his daughter's return and death to her kidnapper. He heard a voice, while he was half-awake, telling him, "My son, take up the sword which is near me. Your prayer for getting back your daughter is





granted. This sword will kill anyone who is your enemy. But if you apply it on one who is innocent, it will miss him. If you apply it on someone who is not only innocent, but also noble, you cannot move your hand."

The king picked up the sword and broke his fast. Next day, he was preparing to go out in search of the princess himself when a young man arrived in the court along with the princess.

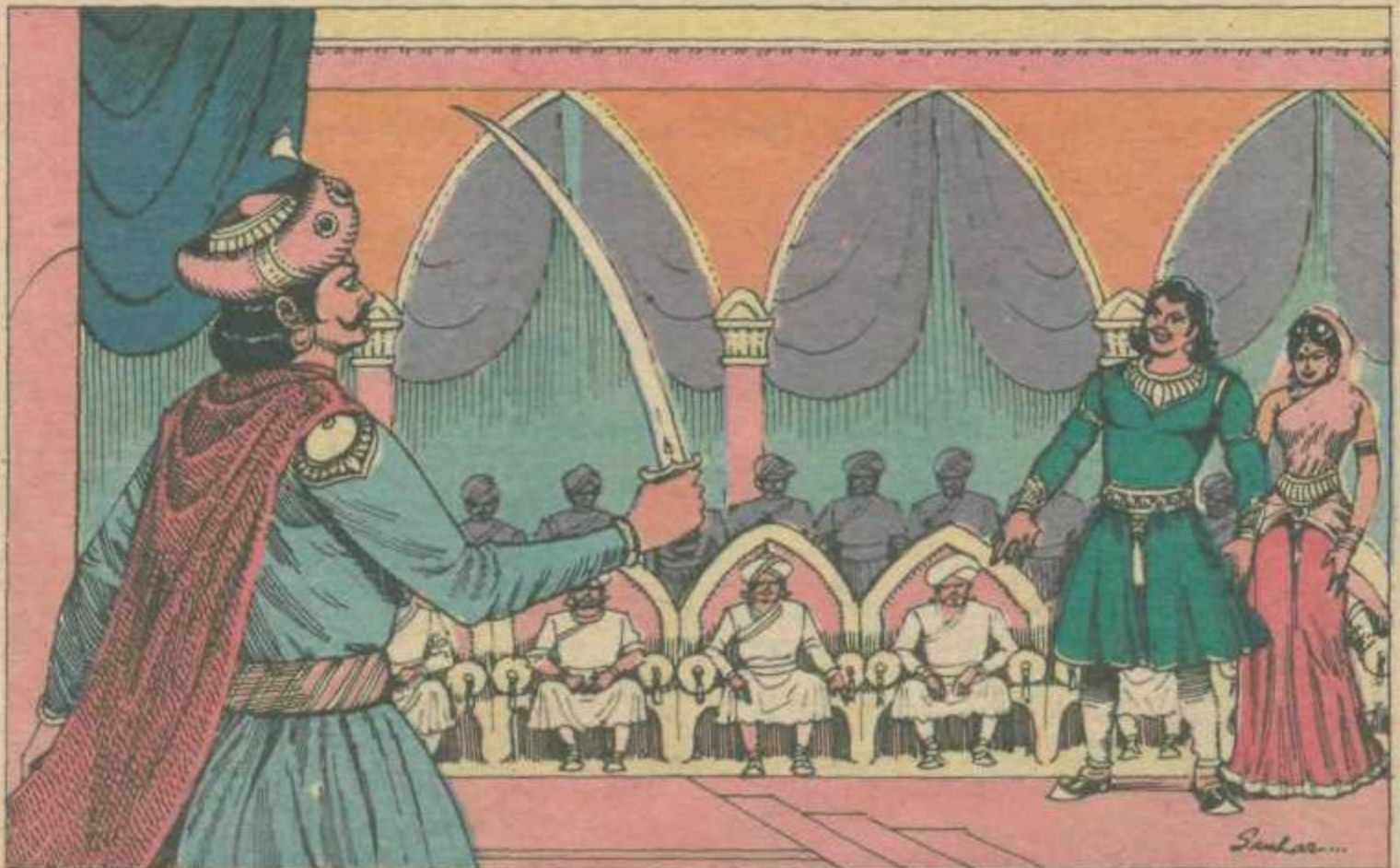
"My lord, here is the princess. Please keep your promise and let me marry her," said the young man.

The king at once tried to unsheath his sword, but he stopped and remained silent for a

moment. Then, in a calm voice, he said, "Young man, the princess shall be married to you at the earliest. I will also pass on the throne to you. I must become a hermit and atone for the three blunders I have committed as a man, as a father and as a ruler."

In keeping with the king's announcement the marriage was performed. The young man ascended the throne. The king went away into the forest for penance.

The vampire paused and demanded of King Vikram in a stern voice, "O King, I have certain doubts. Why did the king try to unsheath his sword if he were to stop? What were his three





blunders? Answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck."

Forthwith replied King Vikram, "Needless to say, the young man was none other than the Tantrik. The king stopped because he could not move his hand. That made the king realise that the young man was not only innocent, but also noble. The princess must have set her heart on him during the fortnight when he was treating her. The two must be communicating with each other. The princess must have gone away to some place with the young man's knowledge on the day he came to meet the king. Had the king given his consent to the young man's proposal, she would have come back to the palace. But when the king asked the young man to leave the

kingdom, she too went away with him. Now, about the three blunders. The king should be grateful to the Tantrik. By asking him to leave the kingdom for no fault of his, the king made a blunder as a human being. As a father he should have tried to understand his daughter's mind. That he did not do, it was his second blunder. Then, he announced that whoever would bring back the princess would marry her. To marry her also would mean becoming his successor. What would have happened if a demon or a bandit or a rowdy would have by chance discovered the princess? He would have married her and become the next king! Such an announcement made by the king was his third blunder."

No sooner had King Vikram finished giving the answers than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.







## A TALE FROM CHINA

# THE MISSING MONEY

Once upon a time, in a village in China lived Chang, a young man. He had become an orphan in his childhood, but because of his sweet nature, he endeared himself to all the villagers. They helped him get some education in the village school. Later he set up a small shop in the village. As he was honest, customers flocked to him. He prospered.

This made his wealthy neighbour, Ung, envious of him. Ung was the sole merchant and shopkeeper in the village. He did not like Chang to rival him, even in a small way. One day he called Chang and said, "My young friend, you are new to business. It

is a tricky thing. One year you may make a good profit, another year you may lose everything. I suggest that you close down your shop and join my shop as my assistant. I will pay you a little more than I pay to my other two assistants."

"Thank you for your concern for me, but, with the blessings of our family deity, I am doing well at the moment. If I run into difficulty, I will come to you," said Chang humbly.

This made Ung quite restless. A man who confesses to be doing well must be doing very well. At night Ung peeped into Chang's house through a window. Chang was counting money. Ung saw







that the young man slowly removed his family deity and removed the plank that was under the idol. He took out a box and put the day's profit into it. Then he put the box back in the hole, covered it with the plank and replaced the idol on it and bowed to the idol.

Ung returned home, but could not sleep a wink. It was morning. Soon Chang left for his shop. Ung stealthily entered his house and removed the box.

Chang discovered the theft only at night, when he wanted to deposit the day's profit in the box. He was taken aback. However, he bowed to the deity and

said, "Mother, I am sure, I cannot be deprived of my hard-earned money on which you stood guard! Help me to recover it!"

In the morning, as he came out of his house, Ung looked at him with curiosity. Ung was sure that Chang would cry out his misfortune. Ung was ready with some stock words of consolation. When Chang did not say a word, Ung was surprised. He thought that perhaps Chang had not yet discovered the theft.

Chang marked both the expressions on Ung's face. He went to report the case to the local judge. "Do you suspect anybody?" asked the judge. Chang hesitated and told him, "I do not know, but Ung's face comes to my mind again and again." Then he told the judge the reason for it.

Now, the judge himself suspected Ung, for he knew Ung's nature. He thought over the issue and then told Chang, "If Ung is the thief, he will surely feel surprised that you have not made a hue and cry over your loss. He will peep through your window again tonight. Now, do as I say."

The judge thought out a plan. In the evening he sent his little



daughter dressed up like a goddess, to Chang's house. She stood where the deity stood. The judge himself and one of his servants remained in hiding.

When everybody went to sleep, Ung came out of his house and headed towards Chang's window. The judge sent a secret signal to his servant. The servant gave out a hoot like an owl. Chang and the judge's daughter became alert. Chang knelt before the little girl and said, "Mother, what should I do to recover my money?" The little girl said, "My son, money never remains with one man. The one who has stolen your thousand gold pieces is a respectable man. Don't insist on knowing his name. Let him have the money. I will give you more."

Ung heard this and rushed home. He was happy that the

deity did not disclose his name to Chang. But he was surprised to know that the amount he had stolen was so big. It did not look so big! He brought out the amount from its hidden place and counted it. It amounted to a little over a hundred pieces of gold only! But the deity cannot speak wrong! He must be wrong in counting! He went on counting the money again and again. "Where is the rest?" he murmured. By and by his murmur became a cry, "Where is the rest? How was I deprived of the rest?" he kept on shouting. As soon as it was morning the judge and his guards entered his house. He was arrested. But he still cried, "What happened to the bigger part of the money?"

Chang's money was returned to him, but Ung went mad.







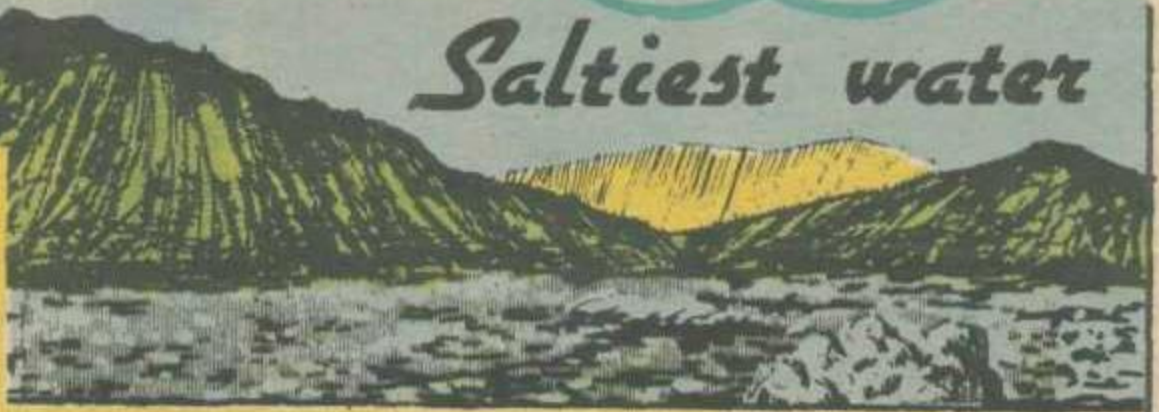
## STRANGE FLOWERS

THE  
MALAYAN CUSTARD  
APPLE TREE PRODUCES  
FLOWERS THAT GROW STRAIGHT  
OUT OF THE TRUNK OR  
BRANCH AND NOT  
FROM TWIGS.

## *Saltiest water*

LAKE ASSAL IN  
DIJIBOUTI, IS  
THE MOST  
SALINE BODY  
OF WATER IN  
THE WORLD. IT

IS **TEN TIMES** MORE SALTY THAN THE OCEANS. NO FISH CAN LIVE IN  
IT BEING 510 FT (155M) BELOW SEA LEVEL, IT IS THE LOWEST POINT IN  
AFRICA AND THE THIRD LOWEST SURFACE IN THE WORLD.

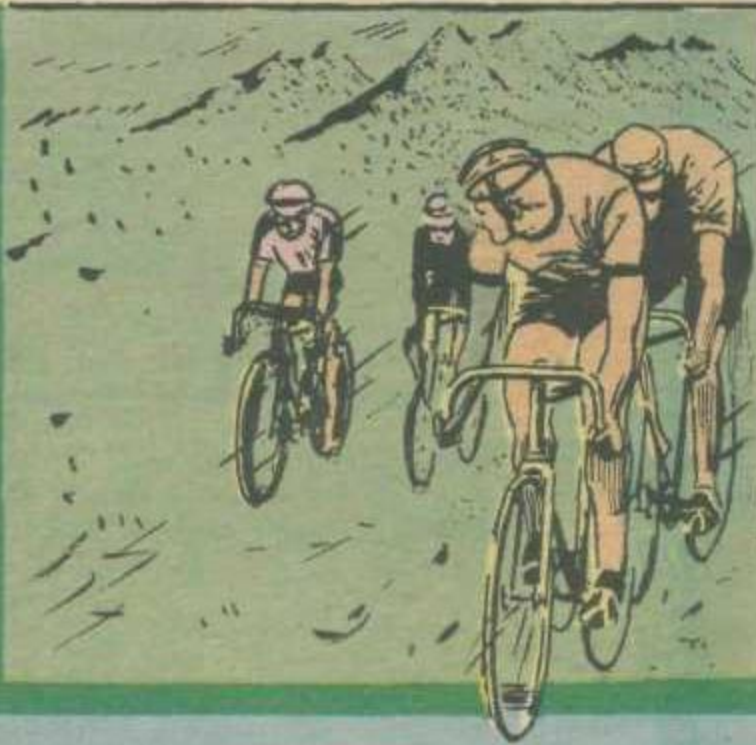


AUSTRALIAN TERMITES BUILD  
MOUNDS AS HIGH AS 20 FT  
(6.09 M) AND WITH A DIAMETER  
OF 100 FT (30.5 M)

## GIANT NEST

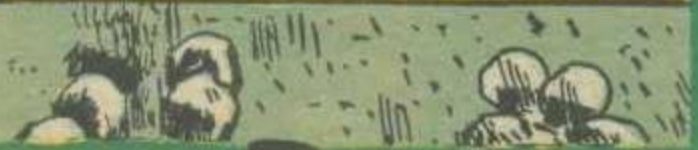






## TOUR DE FRANCE

THE FAMOUS CYCLE RACE, THE TOUR DE FRANCE, WAS FIRST STAGED IN 1903. THE ROUTE CHANGES EVERY YEAR AND INCLUDES AS MUCH VARIED TERRAIN AS POSSIBLE.



## DRESSAGE

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## YOUNGEST WORLD CHAMP







## THE THREE STUDENTS

In days gone by a scholar named Shiv Sharma ran a gurukul on the banks of the river Kaveri, adjoining a forest. He had a number of students living in small huts and learning different lessons from him.

One year three new students, Jaikant, Subroto and Madhav enrolled themselves as his students. The guru found all the three quite intelligent and humble. After three years the guru told them, "My boys, now you have learnt all the basic lessons. It is time you study subjects according to your choice. Tell me what are your choices."

"Sir, I wish to find a job in the royal court. Kindly teach me the subjects that would be helpful to me in this regard," said Jaikant.

"That is all right. You can study statecraft," said the guru.

"Sir, my guardians want me to become a physician. I may be

taught Ayurveda," said Subroto.

"That is all right. You can study the subject," said the guru.

"Madhav sat smiling. "What is your choice?" asked the guru.

"Sir, I came to you because I wanted to be educated. I am happy with what you have taught me. I will be happy with what you will teach me in the future," replied Madhav.

The guru remained thoughtful for a moment and then said, "All right. Let us wait. Feel free to read or do whatever you like for a month."

Jaikant and Subroto gave their attention to statecraft and Ayurveda respectively. Madhav was seen moving about in the forest or doing some work for the gurukul, though nobody asked him to do anything.

Four or five days passed. One day the guru was on his way to the village on one side of the



forest when he heard the melodious sound of flute coming from a nearby meadow. He followed the sound and reached a spot between the forest and the meadow. He was pleasantly surprised to see Madhav playing the flute, seated under a tree. Five or six cowherd boys sat around him and listened to his music with rapt attention.

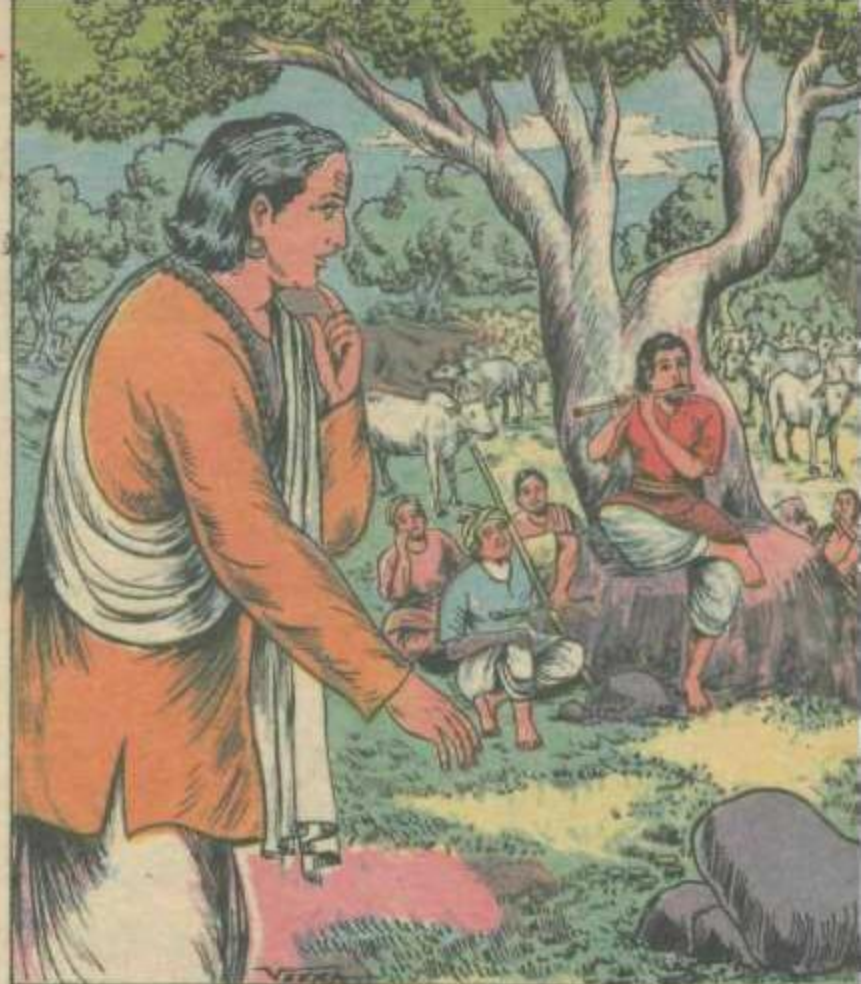
The guru waited till Madhav finished playing the flute and his listeners applauded. Then he went near Madhav. The boy stood up and smiled apologetically.

“My son, you had never told me that you could play the flute so well!” said the guru.

“Sir, I knew nothing of flute-playing when I came to the gurukul. I befriended these cowherd boys and they taught me how to play the flute!” replied Madhav.

“And, sir, in no time he surpassed all of us in the art. We cannot believe that some two years ago he hardly knew how to play the flute!” said one of the cowherd boys.

“That is fine. Well, Madhav, meet me on my return from the village,” the guru instructed him and went away.



When Madhav met him in the evening, he said, “My boy, you have such a natural talent for flute-playing that it would be wrong to ignore it. I suggest that you go to my friend, Pundit Vimal Kishore, the celebrated musician, and learn the art from him.”

Madhav’s face brightened up. He said, “Sir, I never thought this to have anything to do with education!”

The guru smiled and said, “Anything that brings out the best in one is education.” He sent him to his friend, Pundit Vimal Kishore.

Five more years passed. Jai-kant and Subroto completed



their studies and left the gurukul with testimonials issued by the guru. Jaikant sent word to the guru that he had found a job in the royal court and Subroto informed him that he had set up his practice in the town.

A period of another ten years passed. The guru happened to visit the town, to meet an old friend. Later he thought of meeting Jaikant and Subroto, both of whom were in the town. First he went to look up Jaikant who worked in the king's court. When he approached the palace, he learnt that a great flute-player was going to perform before the king. He took position amidst the crowd and waited. Soon, whom

should he see but Madhav! Warmly received by the king, Madhav sat down and cast a spell on all with his flute. The programme ended with the king offering him a heap of gold coins in a golden plate.

Madhav thanked the king and left the court. The guru followed him. Outside the court Madhav handed over the plate to a group of young men and said, "I had promised to give you whatever I receive from the king. I did not expect so much. I hope, this should be enough for your charitable dispensary!"

"Enough, sir, enough, we won't have to beg from anybody else," said the delighted young





men, bowing to the musician.

The guru understood that Madhav was as carefree as ever. He went near him. Madhav was taken aback. He prostrated himself to the guru. Then he informed Jaikant about the guru's presence. Jaikant came running to meet Shiv Sharma. Accompanied by both the students, the guru went to meet his third student, Subroto.

Subroto had become a successful physician. At the request of the three students the guru agreed to pass the night at Subroto's house. As they sat talking, Jaikant and Subroto said, "Sir, we are doing well at our jobs, but we are not as happy as our friend, Madhav, we don't know why!"

"I know why. Both of you had taken to studies with fixed careers in your minds. Madhav

alone had left it to me to decide what is good for him. This is the first of the two reasons for your not feeling quite satisfied with your choices," said the guru.

"And what is the second reason, sir?" asked Subroto.

"Madhav brings joy to others not only through his art, but also through what he earns. You can also do so. Do not look upon your lives as things meant for your families only. Open yourselves to others. That would enrich your lives!" said the guru.

Jaikant and Subroto bowed to the guru. After a while Jaikant said, "Sir, I feel that only today my education was completed ten years after I left the gurukul."

The guru smiled and said, "I appreciate your attitude. But never think that anybody's education can be completed. It can go on till the end—provided we are willing to learn."







## HOW THE BANDIT WAS TRAPPED

**K**ing Madhav of Malav was anxious to find a suitable match for his daughter. He had no other child but Princess Sukanya. His son-in-law was to succeed him to the throne.

"My lord, instead of looking for a prince from another kingdom, let us choose a young man from our own kingdom," the minister proposed.

"Why?" asked the king.

"So that he would not owe allegiance to any other kingdom. We have, among our nobility, a number of eligible young men," said the minister.

The idea appealed to the king. He discussed further with the minister and invited all the young men of the nobility to appear for a series of tests so that some of them could be recruited to some high offices in the royal court. The real purpose was not

disclosed.

A number of young men responded to the announcement. They had to go through several tournaments and tests. The one who excelled all the other competitors in everything was Ranjit. The king congratulated him and said, "My boy, I have in my mind the highest office for you. But we have to wait for a few days."

"What is the office, my lord?" asked Ranjit. The king smiled and patted the young man on the back and said, "The kingship. That is to say, you are to marry Princess Sukanya, my only child, and to succeed me to the throne."

Ranjit bowed to the king and thanked him profusely. The king blessed him and said, "But my boy, I do not wish to hold the wedding ceremony in a hurry. Rather, I must hurry to put an end to the menace posed by a



bandit named Rahu in the frontier area of my kingdom."

"Ranjit, like everybody else, knew about the bandit. In fact, Rahu was the leader of a gang of expert bandits. They kept the people of the frontier terrorised.

"My lord, how do you propose to capture the bandit?" asked Ranjit.

"My son, my officers have tried many methods, but have failed in their mission. I am thinking of personally leading a battalion of my army. I propose to enter the forest and confront him and fight with him," replied the king.

Ranjit kept quiet for a minute

and then said, "My lord, that may or may not yield the desired result. The bandit may flee the forest temporarily, or he may hide in the hills. Our soldiers cannot search every hiding place in the large forest. Besides, how long can you camp in the forest?" observed Ranjit.

"What is your suggestion, then?" asked the king.

"If you allow me, I will try to catch the bandit. But you have to make two announcements. First you have to announce that I have been chosen to marry the princess and succeed you to the throne. But if anybody can excel me at fencing, instead of me he





would marry the princess and get the throne. Second, whoever can capture Rahu the bandit would be suitably rewarded," said Ranjit.

The king accepted his proposal and made the necessary announcements.

Ranjit went to the frontier and mixed with the people of the small villages near the forest and made inquiries about Rahu. Soon he attracted the attention of Rahu's lieutenants. They pounced upon him and carried him to their leader.

"You were trying to capture me for a reward, is it so? Ha ha!! What a tall hope? Why don't you

hope even higher? Why don't you try to excel Ranjit in sword-playing? If you can do so, you will marry the princess and get the throne!" said the bandit and he laughed louder.

"Master! This fellow seems to be Ranjit!" said another bandit who read Ranjit's name written on the locket he wore.

Rahu laughed again. "Young man! You are not satisfied even with the throne! You want to bag a reward by capturing me!" he said.

"If I wished to capture you, it is not for the reward, but for the welfare of the people," said Ranjit calmly.





"What if I defeat you at fencing?" asked the bandit.

"If you do so, you will succeed the king to the throne!" said Ranjit.

"Are you sure that the king will not put me to death instead?" demanded the bandit.

"Upon my honour I can assure you that you would not be killed. And if you can really defeat me, the promised reward will be yours," said Ranjit.

"Let us fight!" exclaimed the bandit.

They were locked in a fencing bout. After a while Ranjit's sword was thrown off. The bandit laughed and Ranjit stood with his head hung.

Ranjit and the bandit went to the king. "My lord!" said the bandit, "I have defeated Ranjit at a sword-play."

"How do we know that?"

asked the king.

"I am prepared to fence with him again!" said the bandit proudly.

He challenged Ranjit to fencing again. To his great surprise, Ranjit defeated him in two minutes!

The bandit stood, terribly ashamed and depressed. He realised that Ranjit feigned defeat in the forest to lure him to the king's presence.

The king embraced Ranjit and said, "Now that the whole kingdom will be yours, what more reward can I give you?"

"My lord, the reward I pray for is pardon for Rahu. I have assured him that he would not be killed," said Ranjit.

The king pardoned Rahu, but he was detained in the capital. Years later he was set free. By then he had no gang and he was also a changed man.





# THE ACCURATE PORTRAIT

**T**he landlord of Rohitpur wanted to appoint a principal for the art academy he had founded. Three artists applied for the post. They were Kishan, Kumar and Suman.

The landlord also appointed a committee of three well-known men of the area to select one from the three candidates.

At the interview, the committee asked the three candidates to paint any object of their choice in an hour's time. The paintings were collected after an hour. The committee sat down to judge who was the best artist. Their verdict went in favour of Suman.

When the three artists met in a canteen, Kishan and Kumar congratulated Suman. Suman laughed and said, "My friends, I did not merit selection any better than you two, but I was a bit clever!"

"How?" asked the two curious friends.

"You two drew pictures of a horse and a cow. However accurately you may draw such objects, one can always find some fault with the pictures by comparing them with the real objects. That is what the committee did with your pictures. But I drew the portrait of a ghost! Obviously, no member of the committee was in a position to find fault with it!" explained Suman.





## THE LION'S SHARE

Shreeman Das writes from Dibrugarh, "The other day we had a speaker from Calcutta who used the term **lion's share** at least ten times in his speech. I have a vague notion about the meaning of the phrase. But I would know whether I am correct or not only after reading your explanation."

It seems the lion's share of the phrases the speaker might have used in his talk went to **lion's share**! Well, the **lion's share** means the largest share in any property, leaving not much for the others who too have a claim to it. Have you not read the fable from Aesop which is the source of this phrase? In the fable the **lion's share** of course meant the whole of the trophy won! Once a lion sought the co-operation of some other beasts like a panther, some jackals and a hyena in a hunting expedition. The beasts co-operated with him. But when the spoil was to be divided, the lion said, "As the king of the forest, I must have a quarter of the prey. Then, because I was the most courageous among all the hunters, I should have another quarter too."

The other beasts stomached the statement because they were hopeful of getting at least the remaining half of the prey. But, clearing his throat, the lion resumed, "And the third quarter of the spoil would naturally go to my wife and my cubs, for they expect it!"

The others were still hopeful of getting a bite each. But the lion cleared his throat once again and said, "And so far as the last quarter is concerned, well, here I am and here you are. Come on, take it whoever among you dares to take it!"

Nobody dared to claim any share from the lion. They dispersed quietly, leaving the whole spoil to the lion.

But today, by **lion's share**, we do not mean the whole of anything, but only the major part.





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**Are the *Vedas* and the *Kathasaritsagara* available in current Indian languages?**

**—Ch. Venkateswarlu, Duttalur**

There are books on the *Vedas* in practically all the current Indian languages. Even the Vedic text has been translated into other languages. But, in principle, the *Vedas* cannot be translated. They are *mantras* and their power remains as much in their sound as in their sense. Also, it is not for the rational or intelligent mind to understand the sense of the Vedic text. Only people endowed with a spiritual vision can really understand it. So, the translations do not convey much.

The case of the *Kathasaritsagara* is quite different. Its stories (including the *Vetala Panchavimsati*) are available in all the current Indian languages, if not as translations, as stories retold.

**What is the best introduction to the *Vedas* in English?**

**—Motilal Das, Balasore.**

*Secrets of the Veda* by Sri Aurobindo.

**What is the longest novel in the world?**

**—C. N. Jayakrishnan, Bombay.**

*Men of Goodwill* by Jules Romains. Originally in French, the English edition runs into 14 volumes and consists of nearly 5000 pages.

*Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the Chandamama.*



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## PICKS FROM THE WISE

There is no one in the world who is not blamed.

— *The Buddha*

As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, wise people falter not, amidst blame and praise.

— *Dhamma pada*

Men are quick to praise and quick to blame; so pay no heed to what others speak of you.

— *Sri Ramakrishna*



Statement about ownership of CHANDAMAMA (English)  
Rule 8 (Form VI), Newspapers (Central) Rules, 1956

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Place of Publication</i>                                     | 'CHANDAMAMA BUILDINGS'<br>188, N.S.K. Salai<br>Vadapalani, Madras-600 026   |
| 2. <i>Periodicity of Publication</i>                               | MONTHLY<br>1st of each calendar month   |
| 3. <i>Printer's Name</i><br><i>Nationality</i><br><i>Address</i>   | B.V. REDDI<br>INDIAN<br>Prasad Process Private Limited<br>188, N.S.K. Salai<br>Vadapalani, Madras-600 026   |
| 4. <i>Publisher's Name</i><br><i>Nationality</i><br><i>Address</i> | B. VISWANATHA REDDI<br>INDIAN<br>Chandamama Publications<br>188, N.S.K. Salai<br>Vadapalani, Madras-600 026   |
| 5. <i>Editor's Name</i><br><i>Nationality</i><br><i>Address</i>    | B. NAGI REDDI<br>INDIAN<br>'Chandamama Buildings'<br>188, N.S.K. Salai<br>Vadapalani, Madras-600 026  |
| 6. <i>Name and Address of<br/>individuals who own the paper</i>    | CHANDAMAMA PUBLICATIONS<br>PARTNERS:<br>1. Sri B. VENKATRAMA REDDY<br>2. Sri B.V. NARESH REDDY<br>3. Sri B.V. SANJAY REDDY<br>4. Sri B.V. SHARATH REDDY<br>5. Smt. B. PADMAVATHI<br>6. Sri B.N. RAJESH REDDY<br>7. Smt. B. VASUNDHARA<br>8. Kum.B.L. ARCHANA (Minor)<br>9. Kum.B.L. ARADHANA (Minor)<br>(Minors admitted to the benefits of Partnership)<br><br>'Chandamama Buildings'<br>188, N.S.K. Salai<br>Vadapalani, Madras-600 026 |

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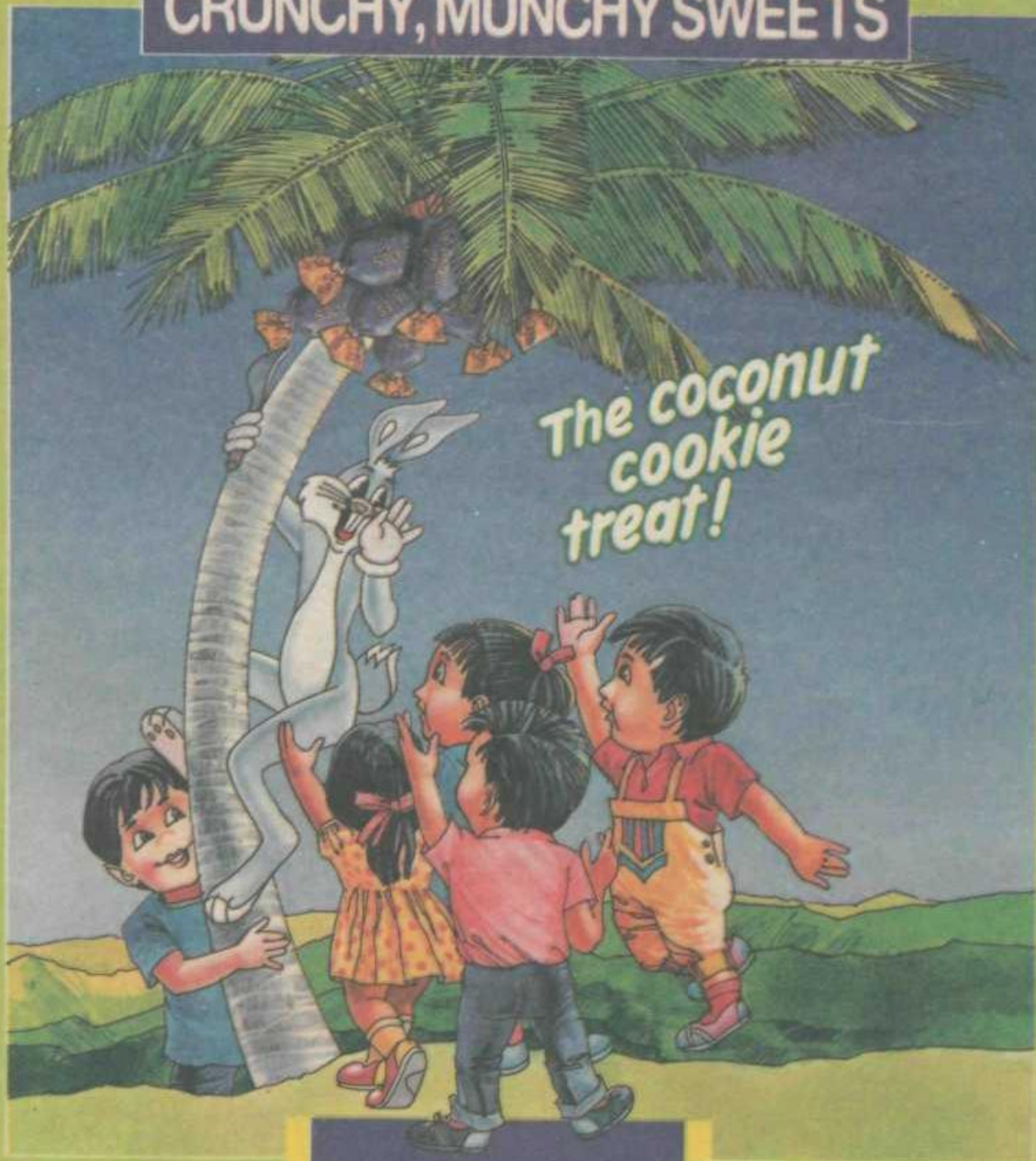
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